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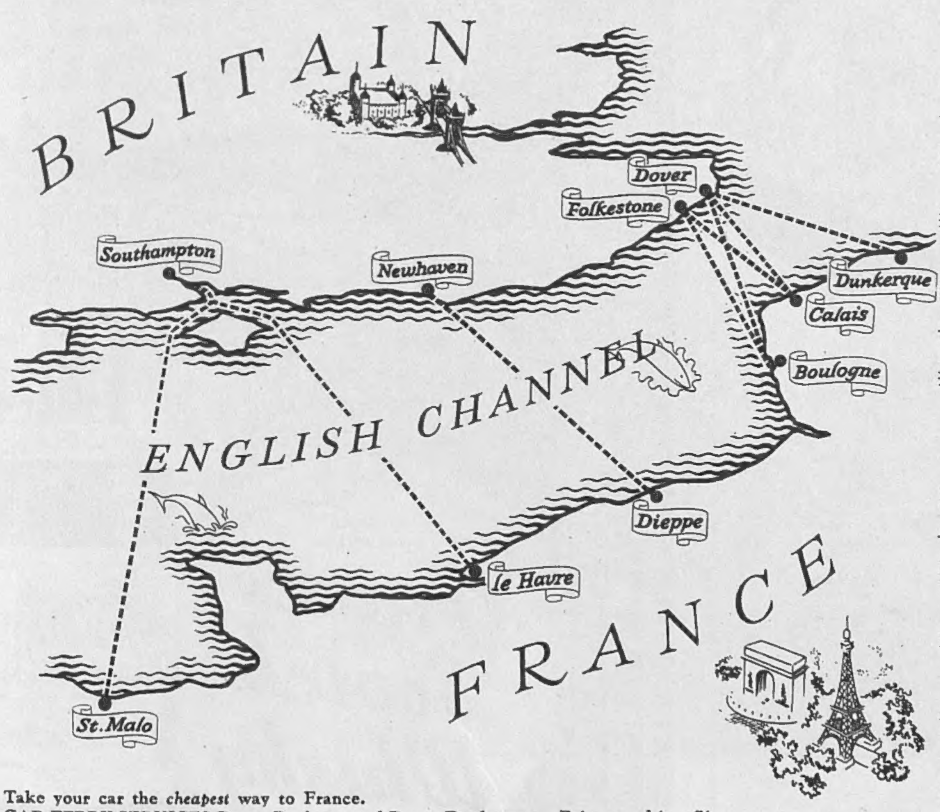

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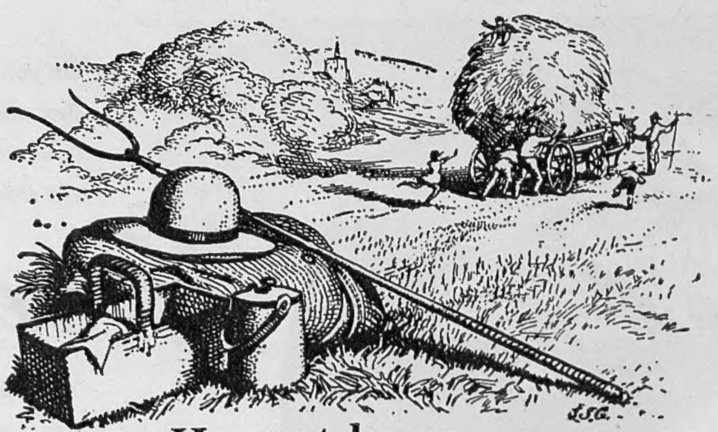

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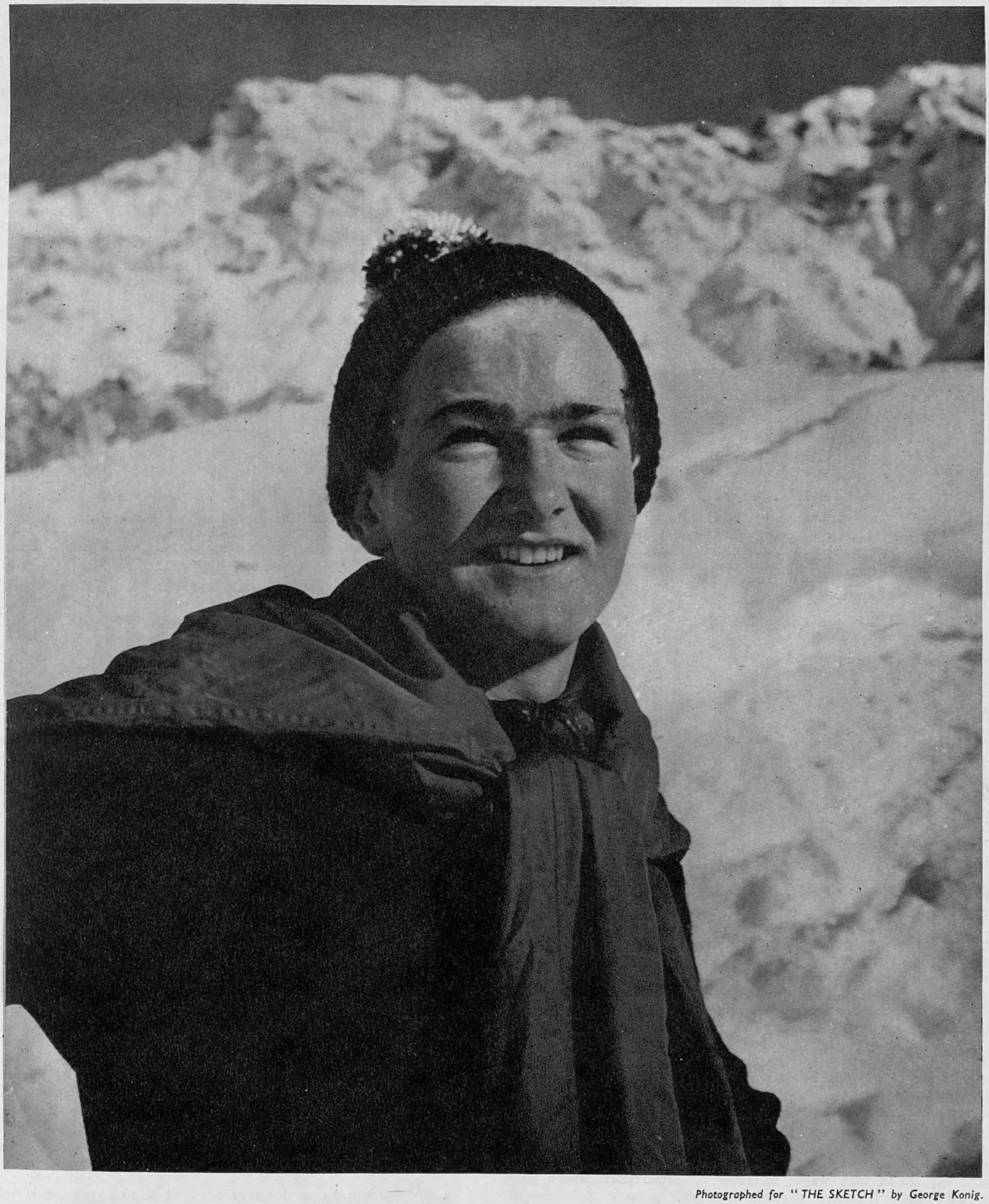


Photographed for "THE SKETCH" by George Konig.

ADMIRABLE SNOWMAN

Overall winner in the British Ski Championships held this year at Wengen, in the Bernese Oberland, was young Robin Hooper, one of the most talented of the post-war crop of British skiers. (More pictures from Wengen on p. 82.)

ALIMENTARY, MY DEAR WATSON. . . . The Sherlock Holmes Society of London held a dinner recently at the Charing Cross Hotel. Eighty members attended out of the society's strength of 150. Our artist, Hargrave, sat at the back, and doodled on his napkin. Each diner carried or wore a clue to his identity as a character from the Case Book, but nobody had the courage to turn up as the Master himself, or even as Watson.

Our Motley Notes

By TOBY O'BRIEN

I SEE that the German Embassy is to re-establish itself in Belgrave Square, a few doors away from the Austrians. Before the war, it used to be originally at No. 9 (and later Nos. 7 and 8 as well), Carlton House Terrace. When Ribbentrop came here during his short and ill-starred embassy, he imported a large number of German workmen to remodel the three houses in the flat and insipid Central European style of the Third Reich. Luckily, however, the Office of Works refused to allow him to interfere with the gilded cornices, so that a false ceiling, three or four feet lower than the original one, had to be constructed.

When all was ready, he gave a gigantic house-warming party. As at that time, however, he was anxious to get German recognised as one of the diplomatic languages, he sent out all his invitations in German: "*Der Deutscher Botschafter und Frau Von Ribbentrop* . . . etc." But he met his match in Sir Winston Churchill. Sir Winston was irritated by the form of the invitation, which was, if I remember rightly, for ten o'clock on a Thursday night, so he blandly sat down and wrote a letter of acceptance which ran: "*Mr. and Mrs. Winston Spencer Churchill present their compliments to the German Ambassador and Frau Von Ribbentrop, and are delighted to accept their invitation to dinner at eight o'clock on Tuesday next.*" That took quite a little disentangling!

I first met Ribbentrop many years before he became a political figure, and always considered him more of an ass than a knave. During the Olympic Games in Berlin in 1936, a very important British magnate (or at least both he and Herr Von Ribbentrop thought him so) arrived unexpectedly with a large *entourage*. Berlin was packed out, but some rooms were found for them by the private Foreign Office which Ribbentrop was then running. S.S. cars and S.S. adjutants were provided to whirl them round, special seats given them in the Guest of Honour Tribune, and a pleasant history-don Count from Bonn University was attached to the party to look after them.

On the last night of their stay, the Count was grey-faced with fatigue. At supper I suddenly noticed my wife having difficulty in keeping a straight face, while the Count went even whiter. Afterwards, I discovered that the magnate had turned to her and said: "Tell me, Mrs. O'Brien, this fellow Ribben*dorf* doesn't seem to be a bad sort of chap?" The visit must have cost the Germans thousands of pounds, and all that happened was that the magnate had got the name of the principal host wrong—a magnificent example of British imperviousness to propaganda.

MY theory about the genealogy of stories was confirmed to me only the other day by the Editor of *The Sketch* himself, who told me about the connoisseur of port whose friends decided to pull his leg. They bought some 5s. port from the local grocer, and asked the expert to identify the year and the shipper. Without hesitation, the connoisseur replied: "Croft's, 1912." His friends were highly delighted with the success of their stratagem, but the

connoisseur was unmoved, insisting that it was the wine of the year which he had mentioned. The long and short of it was that on enquiry it turned out that the butler of one of the practical jokers had, for years, been selling his master's priceless Croft's 1912 to the local grocer who, in all innocence, had been retailing it as a cheap wood port.

This story, which is in circulation again, with various names of the connoisseur confidently attached, and as having happened recently, was told me by my father a good twenty years ago, and I am not sure that he did not attach the name of someone of his father's generation to the story as he told it to me.

In the same way, I was told the other night of a pre-1914 cavalry officer, who was posted to command a quite distinguished infantry unit near London. When a friend asked him what his regiment was, he replied: "I haven't the faintest idea, except that they wear green facings, and you get at them from Waterloo." Sir Winston Churchill recounts this story, and applies it to the formidable Colonel Brabazon—one of the last of the great Victorian dandies—who was his commanding officer in the 4th Hussars, a good twenty years earlier.

I imagine that the story of the two subalterns who were invited to dine at a neighbouring house, where the company was somewhat highbrow, is probably hoary, if the truth were known. A young lady turned to one of the young warriors and said, ecstatically: "Don't you adore Botticelli?" To which he replied: "I am not so sure about that. If I have to drink Italian wine, I prefer Chianti." On their way back after dinner, his friend said: "You put your foot in it properly over that Botticelli business. Surely even you know that Botticelli is not a wine. It is a cheese."

ON a recent visit to Greece, it was pleasing to meet an old friend in Sir Charles Peake, the Ambassador. Greece has been very fortunate in its post-war British Ambassadors and Ambassadresses. There were Rex and Janet Leeper, Clifford and "Peter" Norton, and now Charles and Catherine Peake—all intelligent, friendly and hospitable. The first night I dined at the Embassy, I thought there was something vaguely familiar about the magnificent gold plate bearing arms with the motto: "I like my choice." Charles solved this small mystery for me. Our Embassy in Greece is in a curious position. It is large—over 200 bods—due to its position so close to the Iron Curtain, and the Ambassador is accredited to one of the six remaining monarchies. The post-war Ministry of Works in the pre-Eccles era (it is to David Eccles' intelligent taste that the Embassy now owes its magnificent picture of Byron in Suliote dress—thought to be the finest portrait ever made of the poet) equipped the Embassy a trifle sparsely. Lord Halifax, whose private secretary Charles had been when he was Foreign Secretary, heard of this—and lent the Embassy the whole of his family plate.

Britain's Ambassador has another distinction—that of owning one of the last properly gold-braided full-dress uniforms. The modern Ambassador is a comparatively dowdy creature in his dark-blue tunic with only a little gold braid at collar and cuffs. Charles's uniform, which he inherited, has all the full glory of the old diplomatic service, with its delicious regulation that the gold oak leaves for an Ambassador are to be 4 ins. wide at the waist, but "to spread across the chest according to figure." The uniform was originally designed by Prince Albert in the days when there were only two British Ambassadors—one to the Court of France, and the other to the Sublime Porte. Even the seams—front and back—of the sleeves are gold braided in accordance with the Prince Consort's view of what was properly due to British Ambassadorial dignity. It is magnificent—but I noted that at no time while we were waiting for King Paul and Queen Frederica to come into the Cathedral on a formal occasion did Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador attempt to sit down!

The Tribulations of Tanya

By Anna Zinkeisen and Laurel Pascal

The Norman Keep—the Roman Wall,
The draughty panelled Dining Hall
Beset the guest at Magna Foulis . . .
How fortunate I took my woollies!

CHARLES PEAKE, and another old friend, Dimitri Levidis, Grand Marshal of the Court, whom I first knew years ago in London when he was spending all his time, and most of his private fortune, securing the restoration of King George II., are, I gather, engaged in a conspiracy. (Dimitri, incidentally, is not only one of the most loyal and devoted servants in any Royal house, but is a former Wimbledon tennis player, a bridge player who was the terror of Crockford's, and is fortunate in the possession of one of the loveliest wives and loveliest houses in Greece.) His little conspiracy with the Ambassador is to get the rooms of the Order of St. Michael and St. George in the Royal palace at Corfu restored and repaired. The Michael and George, which used to be given as much to members of the Colonial Service as to the members of the Foreign Service (though now it is almost exclusively confined to the latter), was founded in Corfu when the island was in British occupation. The rooms of the Knights have suffered badly from German and Italian occupation and neglect. I gather that all members of the Order are to be circulated shortly for a subscription—5s. for a C.M.G., £1 for a K.C.M.G., £2 for a G.C.M.G.—and that the Greeks are going to put up the rest of the money!

I made the journey backwards and forwards from Greece in a B.E.A. Viscount. What an excellent plane that is! More comfortable, to my mind, than the Comet, but where did B.E.A. think up the peculiarly horrible lunches served between Athens and Rome? I am all for the classical tradition, but I cannot help feeling that something which closely resembles sacrificial goat should find no part on a menu, particularly if it is followed by a sweet consisting of three slices of orange coated with blancmange, a substance which used to turn my stomach as a child, and still does so to this day. Some of the meals on B.E.A. planes are now so greatly improved that it is a pity that there should be this unfortunate gap in their catering arrangements.

AT the 1900 Club the other evening, where young Julian Amery pleased an audience which included a most approving Leo Amery, I met a gloomy elderly peer. He was complaining about the extravagance of his children, and particularly his son, whose habit it was, he said, "to take taxis everywhere." I endeavoured to cheer him up with the story of the late Lord Henry Chaplin, who was once sent for by his father and severely reproved for his habit of going everywhere by hansom cab. "Why don't you use a bus?" asked his father. "Certainly, father. I will do so as from to-morrow." The next morning a private horse-bus arrived outside the house, in which, and in solitary splendour, Lord Henry cheerfully clip-clopped from one appointment to another throughout the day.

When the late Lord Rothschild was a young man, he too used to have a particular hansom cab which called for him each morning to take him to the City. On one occasion, his father commandeered the cab, being in a hurry, but on arrival at his office only gave the cabby the exact fare. That individual protested, saying: "Mr. Rothschild always gives me five bob." "Ah," replied Lord Rothschild, "but you see, he has a rich father—and I have not."

Recently a foreign diplomat in London was complaining of the fact that his wife was in the habit of taking a cab from the Hyde Park Hotel to their flat in Lowndes Square—but having endeavoured to cross from Knightsbridge at that particular point only the other day, my sympathies are, on the whole, with the lady.

Mrs. Richard Hensman and her father, Sir Wavell Wakefield, M.P., who was chairman of the Jury of the Championships, with Miss Leslie Thompson.

Peter Seilern, who lives in Austria, showed his fluent style to advantage in the Slalom general classification in which he finished fifth, thereby winning in the Junior (under 20) Class.

Former Olympic skier and manager of the British ski teams, Peter Waddell, was given a helping hand by his daughters, Carol-Ann and Angela, before the start of the Slalom.

Watching the Slalom race here were Mr. Charles Taylor, M.P., Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Mackintosh and Charlach Mackintosh, who is proving himself a very promising ski-racer.

Two busy officials together here at the Finish were Mrs. Barbara Ringrose, who announced the times, and Mr. Robert Giddings.

Lining-up before one of the races: Alan Crompton, Nigel Gardner, Shirley Lonsdale, Sarah Jay-Smith and Robin Hooper, who won the Slalom and the Combined Championship.

Checking the course with the aid of small Frances Strong were gate-keeping officials Mrs. L. W. Strong and Squadron Leader J. E. Doran-Webb, here on the Brunner slopes.

BRITISH SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS

Wengen, in the Bernese Oberland, one of the most popular winter-sports resorts with British visitors, was the venue this year of the British Ski Championships. Snow conditions were perfect for the Slalom race, which took place in brilliant sunshine. The Downhill race was unfortunately marred by a sudden rise in temperature and the competitors had to race in pouring rain, but the course was excellently prepared and ski-ing was not too difficult. Overall winner was Robin Hooper (see *frontispiece*), with Nigel Gardner second and Robin Brook-Hollingshead third.

Photographed for "THE SKETCH" by George Konig.

Two more who acted as gate-keeping officials, whose job it is to see that competitors pass through the slalom gates properly, were Mrs. Ivor Miskin and Miss Patricia Home.

Leading Men—I

TONY BRITTON

Photographed by John Vickers.

We begin a new series with a comparatively junior "Leading Man," because Tony Britton's career is almost archetypal in its mixture of the three essential ingredients for a life in the theatre—talent, hard work and good luck. "Discovered" in an amateur production at Weston-super-Mare, he went to the Library Theatre, Manchester, as an A.S.M. and was playing the juvenile lead by the end of six months. There followed years of ups, downs and round abouts until his first big part in London in Christopher Fry's *The Firstborn*. He was "discovered" again, at Edinburgh, in *The Player King*, and this led to his Bassanio opposite Peggy Ashcroft at Stratford last year. Now he has just begun rehearsals at Stratford for his second season, and for one of his most taxing parts so far—Thersites in *Troilus and Cressida*. With him have gone his wife and Cherry, his young daughter aged five, who followed in father's footsteps for a while by working as a child model, but has given up her career for school.

Maryon Lane, ballerina.

A Visit to the Wells

BEING THE ACCOUNT OF A PIOUS JOURNEY TO ISLINGTON

IT is a large, functional-looking theatre outside the perimeter of the fashionable West End. Any night of the week between the end of September to the middle of July, you can go there and hear opera, or watch ballet. Both opera and ballet companies tour up and down England, drawing large crowds wherever they go; the ballet company has just returned from the United States, and leaves for South Africa in April for twelve weeks. It is a national theatre, as the Old Vic and the Stratford Memorial Theatre are national, presenting national artists, using the English language, asking only prices that anyone can afford. To say this is not to denigrate Covent Garden, which must necessarily charge more for its seats and would probably, in any case, prefer to be thought of as international, but it is to emphasise what is the most distinctive characteristic of the Sadler's Wells Theatre Opera and Ballet.

There is nothing in the charter that says that the theatre's artists must be from Great Britain or the Commonwealth, but, in fact, they are so. The policy is occasionally relaxed, as when Rafael Kubelik comes to conduct *Katya Kabanova*, by Janacek, for four performances in June. Operas are sung in English, the translations being in most cases specially prepared. Only in the production of original English operas does the theatre admit to a "poor record"—though the first production of *Peter Grimes* was at the Wells.

But what makes the Wells most national in character is its public. Devotees of the two arts from all classes of society—grocers, students, sailors on leave, housewives, the young, the old and the middle-aged, they keep the seats warm at the Wells. The heart of this public are the faithful ones who come to everything, but the majority (national in this certainly) prefer the old tried favourites, and this explains the difficulty that the Wells often has in experimenting. It is a difficulty that faces Opera more than the Ballet, because ballets, lacking a system of notation, are always being new-created, while *Carmen* and *Cav.* and *Pag.* go on for ever.

Old or new, opera at Sadler's Wells is credible; it is most English in this. No 12-ton soprano performs mechanically the meaningless gestures she first learned at Dresden when the world was young, but each production is a special creation, and each singer by careful rehearsal has been trained to act as well as to sing. Producers are imported from the "legitimate" theatre: Tyrone Guthrie is only one of the well-known theatrical producers who have worked for the Wells.

It is not so with choreographers. The producer of Opera need never have sung a note, but a choreographer *must* have been a dancer. More than that, ideally he must know the dancers with whom he works, for *their* bodies, *their* techniques and *their* personalities are the raw material of his ballet. So that we may expect a Ballet Company to throw up, as it were, its own choreographers, and it was in order to see something of this process that I went to Sadler's Wells to watch rehearsals of the new John Cranko ballet, *The Lady and the Fool*.

* * *

IT was raining. I have an impression of stairs upon stairs upon stairs of concrete and bleak corridors of yellow brick. There are moments backstage at Sadler's Wells when you can believe yourself at an Approved School, and the feeling is heightened by the habit of referring to the dancers by their surnames. "I'll send Wright down to see you," someone would say, as a prefect might promise the presence of Smith Minor after the Kickabout.

The Ballet rehearsal room was occupied by an Equity meeting. David Gill, who would, I suppose, be the shop steward if one could imagine such a thing in a Ballet Company, held the floor, a large piece of court-plaster above one eye. We watched through glass doors. "Equity is so useful for dancers," said my guide. "They get compensation every time they break an ankle." When, later on, I saw Patricia Miller being dropped resoundingly on the floor because her partner had been away working in a film and hadn't rehearsed that bit, the remark came home.

Owen Brannigan and Marjorie Shires in a scene from "Don Pasquale."

So first we went upstairs to see the costume room. There were Mr. Cranko and the designer, and a Miss Anderson, grey-haired and kind, all three engaged in an agitated conference about some orange net skirts, to which conference the single immutable sewing machine gave a context of eternity. "I hate orange and I hate net," said Miss Anderson. Someone was sent out for an old leprous ruff which had obviously been left about in the cellar for rats to feed on. "That 's the kind of thing I like," she said; "couldn't one of the clowns wear that? We could break it down a bit further with sulphuric acid."

Then the rehearsal. There were mirrors all round the room; a *barre* ran down one side; those of the company not actually dancing sat on a clutter of benches and theatrical hampers in one corner, or lay stretched out, like Kenneth MacMillan upon a radiator. The girls were knitting. Conversation made a constant background of noise to the intermittent piano and the light thud of the dancers' shoes, and the murmured "One and two and *three* and four"—for the "and" count seems to be as important in Ballet as it is in the Army or in early-morning calisthenics.

The dancers wore old clothes—torn woollen tights latticed with patches of flesh, rolled-up jeans, turtle-neck sweaters, open-front shirts tied loosely at the waist, crinoline skirts pale-grey with much washing and battered out of shape by use. At this stage, mistakes could still be made. Couples managed to lose each other, there were trips and stumbles; only occasionally did the whole composition jell, and something of the ballet was communicated. Even at those moments my attention would often be caught and held by the solitary understudy, a boy of seventeen, mimicking alone, in a corner of the room, the movements of his principal.

* * *

THE lonely understudy might himself be a figure from a Cranko ballet. For Mr. Cranko has a preoccupation with lonely, unrespectable people outside the security of Society, who sometimes get the better of the "superior" people who have rejected them, but remain sad. *The Lady and the Fool* is about two clowns who find their way into a fashionable ball. The beautiful Lady rejects her three suitors, and chooses one of the clowns, who is beaten and thrown out—but she goes with him. The second clown is left alone. As he gazes despondently out of the window, his friend returns for him.

How, I wanted to know, was this born? Well, said Mr. Cranko, it began with a situation—the despised clown at a ball of grotesques. Within this situation pieces of dramatic action coalesce individually, until they have formed a working scenario, and it is time to think of the music: in this case, it was a matter of hunting through Verdi to find music that would express the moods and action already in the choreographer's mind. Thereafter the scenario is broken down into musical phrases, and only at this point does work begin with the dancers, who are used, as words are used by a writer, to be marshalled into patterns of meaning. For meaning is important to John Cranko, who, by the use of what T. S. Eliot might

call "objective correlatives," hopes to do away with the primitive dumb-show that so often mars classical ballet.

The Lady and the Fool will have its first presentation in London on March 31st. On a Sunday evening at the end of last month, I was able to attend the *premières* of no fewer than five ballets, when aspiring choreographers of the Company tried out new work before an invited audience. There was no orchestra; the music was canned, or played on two pianos. Occasional confusion or a fall gave evidence of inadequate rehearsal time snatched from lunch-hours, or at the end of a tiring day. The dancers wore tights, or costumes picked out from the wardrobe. Sets were sketched in, or consisted of no more than a sky-cloth. Among a critical, friendly, largely professional crowd, Dame Ninette de Valois sat in a box to one side, like a beneficent headmistress presiding over the School Concert.

One ballet by David Poole had been performed before. Another was embarrassing, a third, pedestrian. But most of us were pleased by two deft evocations of mood by Peter Wright (his first choreographic work) and excited by *Laiderette*, a brilliant creation by Kenneth MacMillan, who has a talent for composing ballets that cannot be taken into the Company's repertory; his two other works for the Choreographic Group were to music by Stan Kenton, and *Laiderette* demands a harpsichord, a piano and a harp, which, if the ballet is in fact adopted, will make the orchestra pit uncomfortably crowded.

Both *Laiderette* and *The Lady and the Fool* are composed in an idiom that would make it unthinkable to find them in the repertory of any of the Continental Ballets visiting this country. Kenneth MacMillan and Peter Wright do not share all John Cranko's principles of choreographic method, nor do they share each other's, but in the work of all three there is a common quality, and it is a quality to be found at the Wells. Pre-eminently, I should say that it is a strong pictorial sense, and a strong sense of *theatre*; no ballet of this school is likely to be a series of set pieces strung together by an apology for a plot.

A sense of theatre is not, of course, the same thing as a sense of life. The Picasso-pierrots of *Laiderette*, masks, clowns, the sinister variants of Svengali or Coppelius lifted from the Gothic tradition, all these add up to something that is not a reflection of life, but is life seen through the distorting medium of Ballet folklore—an inbred art, in which human emotions are applied not to human, but to theatrical situations. Unlike other creative artists, choreographers do not mix much in the world.

Two pictures of the adage from "The Lady and the Fool." The first is taken at rehearsal, the second as it will appear on stage.

John Cranko.

Indeed, how could it be expected that they should? Dancers at the Wells often have a day lasting from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Most of their friends are dancers; much of what spare time they have is taken up with lessons. The girls, who do not smoke and most of whom do not drink, are usually tired enough to prefer to spend a free evening putting their feet up than to (spare us!) dancing at a fashionable night-club. Few of them combine marriage with a career, unless, like Elaine Fifield, they marry within the theatre; Miss Fifield married the conductor of the orchestra during the Company's recent tour of America.

Isolation is the greater for those who began at the School, and the majority of the Company have come on from it. The School gives them a sound, liberal education, as well as a dancer's training; they are prepared for the General Certificate, and classes in the liberal arts continue up to the age of eighteen. Nobody could deny the value of this extra teaching, but it contributes to their removal from the world outside the theatre. Patrick Hurde, our young understudy, left home at eleven years of age on a scholarship. Since then, his life has been divided between the School, the Theatre and a succession of changing lodgings. Dancers are dedicated people; their art demands it.

* * *

ALL theatre people are insidiously charming. This is terrifyingly true of the Ballet. One visit had multiplied, I had filled a notebook, and it was time, if I were not to remain for ever in that timeless world, to stuff my ears with wax, lash myself to the mast of a double-decker bus, and set sail again for Ithaca in the Strand.

But, even on so short an acquaintance, one regrets leaving. We have no evidence that the sailors were sorry that they answered the Sirens' song; all we know is that they never came back. And I can understand why the faithful public at the Wells returns again and again for evening doses of the magic that obliterates for a while the pavements, and the grey air, and the tedious endeavour of a working week in London.

JOHN BOWEN.

Our Bookshelf

ALIBI INNINGS. By Barbara Worsley-Gough. (*Michael Joseph.* 10s. 6d.)

THE CRETAN COUNTERFEIT. By Katherine Farrer. (*Collins.* 9s. 6d.)

NO MAN'S STREET. By Beverley Nichols. (*Hutchinson ; 10s. 6d.*)

Reviewed by G. B. Stern

WHY, when we see a picture on a book's jacket of a hangman's noose entirely surrounded by tiny cricketers, are we liable to exclaim: "Oo, this looks fun!" and pick it up at once for light reading? For if I saw the same thing on the front page of a picture paper, I should hardly regard it as an occasion for flippancy, but only a regrettable pandering to what is supposed to be the "public demand."

And *Alibi Innings is* fun. Though she must guard against laying stress on positive eccentricity, in her new thriller Miss Barbara Worsley-Gough has undoubtedly proved her gift for amusing dialogue closely related to her skill in character-drawing:

> *"We used to climb those trees and bits of bark used to fall in my eyes because he always went up first, and when I complained, all he said was, 'I'm afraid I'm a pioneer.'"*
>
> *"Cold war," he repeated. "Such nonsense. . . . In my day we called it 'demoralising the enemy'—same thing . . . Hannibal did it with elephants."*
>
> *It was a worthless tale, told with the morbid gusto with which very old house-keepers relate the forgotten scandals of great families.*

The actual crime she does not perhaps handle so deftly as her incidental comedy; the red herrings flying across the page seem so obviously red herrings that one is unlikely to mistake them for seagulls. . . . I discarded at once the two people offered for my darkest suspicion, so there was no need for her to keep on firmly pushing my nose down on to a false scent; though it is only fair to add that I had not an idea of the real murderer until she told me, when I had to admit that the solution was not too far-fetched. The murderee, an elderly lady novelist, highly successful and deplorably pleased with herself, is altogether too rude without being funny; on the other hand, her husband, the beloved Squire of the village, who wished that his wife did not regard cricket "as a game of tip and run played by a gang of noisy louts," proves genuinely deserving of the final tribute:

> *It had never occurred to the Squire that his constant preoccupation with the happiness of young people was the secret of his own youthfulness of mind and body, which he attributed to his habit of reading the leading articles in three daily newspapers and of doing exercises on the bath mat.*

THIS month's choice of the Crime Club, *The Cretan Counterfeit*, is by a scholar of Oxford (like Miss Sayers) well up in her subject (like Miss Christie). Less gay and casual than Miss Worsley-Gough's thriller, it should go to those with a more serious taste for crime; while her knowledge of the little sly backwaters, tributaries, pools and eddies of psychology prevents any dryness from the Cretan dust. It is, in fact, a first-class selection by the Club; the sleuth, Detective-Inspector Richard Ringwood, emerges normally human and intelligent, instead of so incredibly obtuse that the Yard could only be retaining his services out of pure charity, or with a long, thin and quite preternaturally talented nose for clues; and the two chief suspects for the murder of Sir Alban Worral, both members of his expedition to excavate some buried dainty in ancient Minoan art, are also neither angels nor devils, but continually interesting and morally mobile.

Miss Farrer, however, indulges herself in a trick of technique which I have frequently met before in writers of detective tales: it is where the investigator sits down alone with his notebook and draws up a neat table recapitulating facts, motives, opportunities, pointers and deductions, presumably to clarify it for his own use. One can have no objection to an author's private jottings at this half-way stage, but the further purpose of including it as a vital part of the entertainment must be, I imagine, to give the reader as much data for guessing as the detective has already accumulated; and that is the reason for my objection; it lifts away our story-book and turns it into a game.

The excellent solution at the end is reached in the good old orthodox way, none better: to assemble by invitation or by arrest all the characters closely concerned, and in a dramatic monologue reveal to them exactly what has been discovered; then, by a sensational ruse, get the criminal to declare his guilt; this moment of exposure more often than not will be followed by attempted suicide—("Quick! Stop him! Ah. . . . too late!")—and all the rest live happily ever after, including the detective and his wife. Have you ever noticed in detective fiction how often their marriages are a radiant success? What a pity Sherlock Holmes never had a shot at it.

THROUGHOUT *No Man's Street* we can spot Mr. Beverley Nichols being surprised and considerably amused at finding himself the author of a real thriller; not that he obtrudes in person, except once to employ an engagingly old-fashioned technique:

> *What was the significance of that information and how Mr. Green interpreted it, we may learn at a later stage in our story . . . but this, we must remind ourselves, is a detective story, and we must not pause. . . .*

etceterah, etceterah, etceterah (says the King of Siam).

Having had the luck to hit on a completely original idea (he may well reply with dignity that it was brilliance, not luck), the author then begins to revel in all the minor tricks of the trade: the victim is found "sprawled across his desk"—("slumped" would have done)—on a foggy evening when our Yard Superintendent hopes to remain at home, for he, too, is a happily married sleuth (Mr. Nichols' least favourite word); the Sleuth-in-chief, Horatio Green, belongs to the Father Brown school: chubby, mild, apparently harmless, blinking like mad, "very innocent and owlish," when he was, in fact, at his most alert; having also a perceptible affinity with his author in their passion for flowers and fountains; one of his invaluable assets, almost amounting to a sixth sense, is his "exceptionally delicate sensory equipment"; literally by picking up the scent in time, he can often pick up the criminal; another of Mr. Nichols' trade-marks appears in Horatio Brown's—no, *Green's*—dreamy inside knowledge of the making of music and the psychology of musicians. I went straight through the first half utterly absorbed. Then—

Here follows a confession which I am well aware must put me far outside the pale with all honest addicts to criminal fiction: when the story is good enough to bring me as far as this, I have to be enlightened as to whodunit in order to enjoy reading the rest; otherwise I get irritated by all the legitimate devices to keep me from guessing the truth; I find no pleasure in being thus baffled; not *who*dunit but *how*dun is where my special enjoyment lies, and how the sleuth-in-chief noses it out.

So, unashamed, I look at the end. Then I can settle down to savour at leisure such delicacies, in the second half, as Mr. Green's interview with a certain Mr. Smithers, and the reason why the charlady was aware of the *exact* time—

> *"Because they were just startin' a sacred concert on the wireless. So, of course, I switches off."*
>
> *"Had you any particular reason for looking out of the window?"*
>
> *"I 'ad. Mrs. Jeffrey's cat. Creating it was, on my steps."*

One could quote several dozen other examples of humour and ingenious "planting," but for one's continual panic of slacking the tension for readers who prefer not to know for certain what anything means until the final dénouement, when Mr. Nichols abandons originality, and returns—not without a gleam of mischief—to the good old orthodox way: Horatio Green assembles all the characters closely implicated, dramatically peels away layer after layer of mystery, and by a sensational ruse . . . (*da capo, da capo*).

Having read *No Man's Street* we cannot too warmly recommend Mr. Beverley Nichols to go on pursuing his new and marvellously exciting adventure.

Personality Parade—17

JAMES ROBERTSON JUSTICE

Photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Jitendra Arya.

There is only one James Robertson Justice—a giant of a man with an infinite capacity for living life to the full. The world has always been his stage and at forty-eight he has played a remarkable number of parts. Sometime soldier, sailor, engineer, geologist, schoolmaster, photographer and foreign correspondent, he has chopped trees in Canada, raced cars at Brooklands, published a book on wild orchids, acted in more than thirty films, paddled a canoe up the Danube—and recounted his impossible experiences in a radio series that people clamour for him to publish. But he prefers adding to the experiences to writing about them. He speaks several languages with incredible fluency, plays the bagpipes and the French horn, and can whistle a Mozart symphony from beginning to end. He is a crack shot, an expert fly-fisherman, can man and fly a falcon, and is one of the last punt-gunners on the British coast. He is proud to be a founder member of the Severn Wildfowl Trust, and has served on the Council since its inception. Shakespeare would have loved him : ". . . justice, in fair round belly, with rich capon lin'd, with eye severe and beard of formal cut, full of wise saws and modern instances."

Strictly Biographical : 2. By Louis T. Stanley

Henry Moore

IN a broadcast speech at the first Royal Academy dinner held after the war, the then president, Sir Alfred Munnings—the nearest to an official leader that the English art world possesses—made an attack unprecedented in the history of that institution on three artists : a Frenchman, a Spaniard and an Englishman.

The modern school of painting was identified with Matisse and Picasso, but an English sculptor, Henry Moore, was the main target for Sir Alfred's attack. He did not mince words. Referring to Moore's " Reclining Figure " at the South Bank Exhibition, he maintained it was an outrage, fit for the dumping-ground and nothing else. Strong criticism to hurl against the only British artist to win the 500,000-lire award at the Venice Biennial Exhibition and the only one to be given a whole floor for a show at the New York Museum of Modern Art.

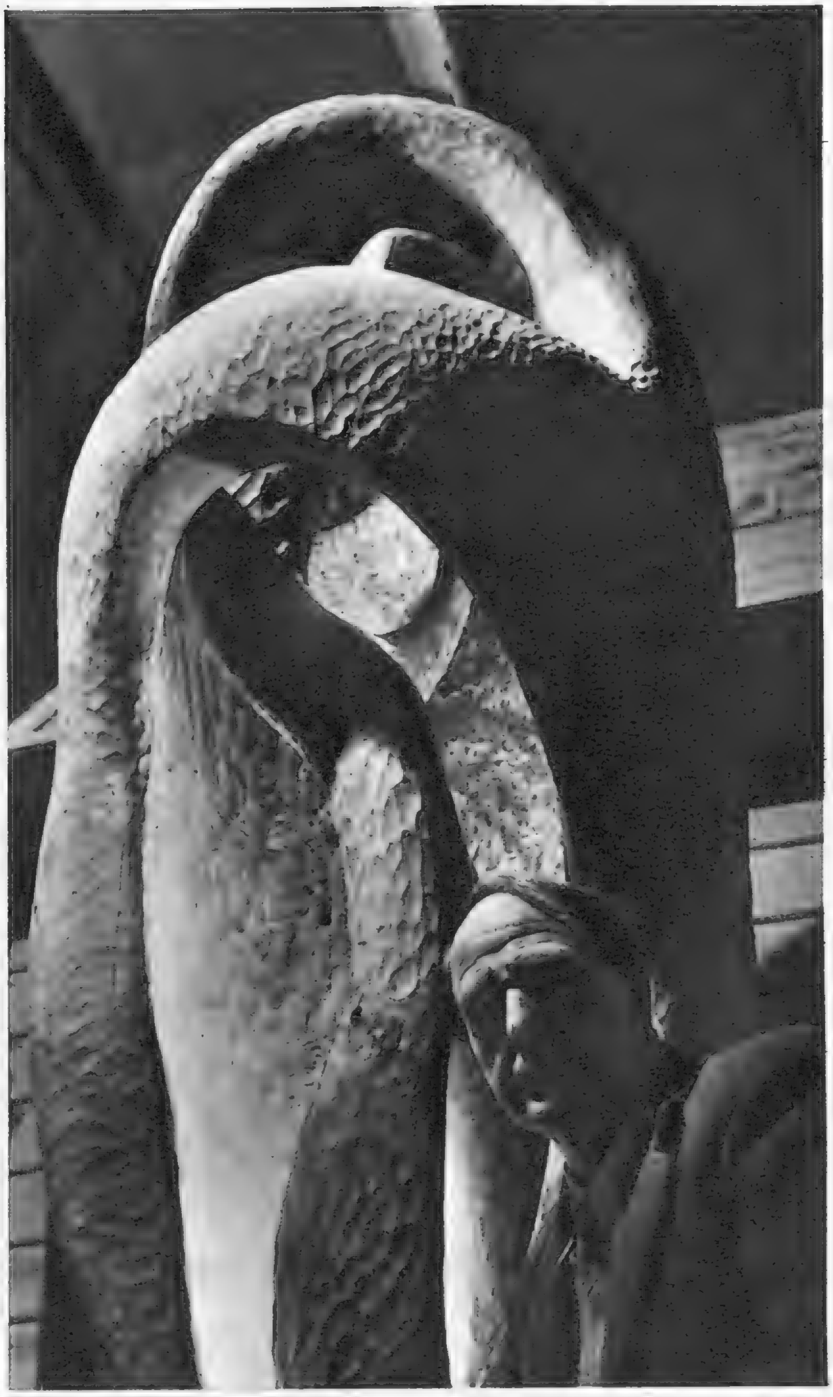
At the time Moore refused to comment. He excused himself on the grounds that he had not heard the broadcast, but Sir Philip Hendy, Director of the National Gallery, added a pertinent postscript : " Sir Alfred Munnings has informed the British public that Henry Moore exists. The rest of the world has known it for a long time."

WITH such thoughts in mind, I met the sculptor in the seclusion of his sixteenth-century cottage at Perry Green, a hamlet in Hertfordshire. I know it is a commonplace to ruminate on the astonishing similarity between little men and great men—a thought which occurs frequently in the political arena—but in Moore I found a man entirely unlike what I had expected. Here was no sheltered artist who had always lived on the margin of life ; here was no arty poseur : instead I found a quietly-spoken Yorkshireman, with many of the homely qualities of that county.

Life has not always been easy for this son of a coal-miner whose childhood ambition it was to be a sculptor. Scholarships to the Leeds School of Art and the Royal College of Art in London showed that he was not mistaking appetite for ability, though in both places he found the normal academic training in sculpture unsatisfying.

The formative influences came from outside sources. Roger Fry's *Vision and Design* opened Moore's eyes to the range of African Negro and Mexican sculpture. The foundation of much of his later work is based on the full three-dimensional realisation and truth to material which are the characteristics of African Negro sculpture.

Moore talked of his initial reaction to the British Museum galleries . . . the monumental impressiveness of Egyptian sculpture, the magnificent Etruscan Sarcophagus figures, and the Sumerian sculptures. A Royal College of Art travelling scholarship took him to Italy for six months. There he avoided the Renaissance influence and sought the simple, monumental forms of life, finding what he wanted in the chapel of Santa Maria del Carmine at Florence, in the solemn solid figures grouped on the walls by Masaccio. Several artists have influenced Henry Moore,



"Sketch" photographs by Harold White.

such as Blake, Giotto, Picasso and Turner; the palæolithic cave paintings in Spain left their mark; but nothing has equalled the impact of those Masaccio paintings, reinforced by the solemnity of Mexican sculpture.

Moore is interested in the rounded, solid shapes into which life builds itself. The trend was self-evident when he showed me round his studios. Walking from one figure to another and looking at the disordered groups, varying from hand-size to life-size, I realised that here were no pure abstractions. Each piece, in its own individual way, was deeply involved in humanity: each was an expression of the significance of life. Here were no fag-ends of the set form-values of Renaissance Europe. Moore's sculpture takes us back to the simple rounded forms of life.

I WAS interested to find out how Moore approaches his subject-matter. Apparently it is by no means an arbitrary or stiffly intellectual one. He sometimes begins by drawing with no preconceived problem to solve, with only the desire to use pencil on paper, and makes lines, tones and shapes with no conscious aim, but as his mind takes in what is so produced, a point arrives where some idea becomes conscious and crystallises, and then a control and ordering begins to take place.

Or sometimes he starts with a set subject; or to solve, in a block of stone of known dimensions, a sculptural problem he has given himself, and consciously attempts to build an order-relationship of forms which would express his idea. But if the work has to be more than just a sculptural exercise, unexplainable jumps in the process of thought occur and the imagination plays its part.

For instance, the main piece of his exhibition at the Leicester Galleries in London which opens to the public this week is called *King and Queen*. It consists of two figures in bronze, somewhat over life-size, seated side by side. I was curious to find out the significance of this group, and Moore explained that it has nothing to do with present-day Kings and Queens, but is more connected with the archaic or primitive idea of a king. The *clue* to the group is perhaps the head of the king, which is a head and crown, face and beard combined into one form and in Moore's mind has some slightly Pan-like suggestion, almost animal, and yet, he thought, something kingly. How the group came about he did not know, unless it might be that in the last year or two he had read stories to his daughter in which kings and queens had appeared a lot and that might have made his mind open to such a subject.

I was impressed by Moore's respect for material. When he carves wood, it is frequently in a shape which preserves its quality of growth and movement. Sculpture in wood usually has an upward and vertical movement like the tree from which it came. On the other hand, when his work is in stone, the shape is always more concentrated. He discovers, within the block, forms that symbolise the life he finds in them. It is as if he had become aware that these figures were always in the block and had merely stripped away the concealing shell to reveal them in all their stoniness.

HENRY MOORE'S art is a challenge: a challenge to lazy habits of thought, to complacency of vision. There are conventional ways of seeing, eating and talking, just as there is a conventional way of looking at nature. An artist is a man who views nature with clear-sighted vision. He is continually garnering material from his experience of things seen, but he knows that appearances do not necessarily correspond to reality. As Graham Sutherland has observed, "I found that I could express what I felt only by paraphrasing what I saw." Because Moore's work does not aim at reproducing natural appearances, it is not therefore an escape from life, but may be a penetration into reality.

The seated and reclining figures in the studios, whether immediately recognisable or not, seemed to reflect something of the vitality of their creator's aims. His works may or may not appeal to the individual beholder. His women may be tortoise-headed or pin-headed—they certainly are not the heads of Madonnas or angels as we see them—but controversies concerning their æsthetic merits must not allow us to forget that Henry Moore is the only sculptor in England who has really found new contents and new forms for the human figure. Formally, and in his exploitation of his material, he now moves on lines first explored by Barlach, thirty or forty years ago, but his efforts provide the only hope left for the art of monumental sculpture to survive.

Our Social Diary

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the first snowdrops and the showing of the spring fashions by London's leading couturiers, the weather has sharply reminded us that winter is by no means past.

But there is a thing to be said in favour of the cold: it helped one to enjoy the exhibition at Douglas Percival's of the Paintings of Provence by Count Raben, who has captured all the warmth and sunshine of that part of France in a most nostalgic way.

Count Raben is Danish by birth, and was at one time attached to the Embassy in London; he held an exhibition of bird paintings in New York last year, but has only recently taken to painting landscapes. The pictures now being exhibited are of views from the valley between Cannes and Grasse, where his own house is situated.

Count Raben and his charming wife gave a cocktail party on the evening of the private view, and when I arrived, I found them surrounded by their many friends, who were unanimous in praise and enjoyment of the paintings. Among the guests were Doreen, Marchioness of Linlithgow, and her brother-in-law Lord Charles Hope, Mr. and Mrs. Sandy Cameron, who bought one of the paintings and told me that they are shortly off on a visit to the South of France, Lord and Lady Hillingdon, Earl Cadogan, Sir Eric Miéville, and Lady Joan Gore-Langton, whose husband has recently been appointed Commandant of the Guards Depôt at Caterham.

THERE has been some strong criticism recently levelled at the organisation of charity dances—quite unjustifiably, in my opinion—as there is no doubt that the majority of the charities concerned benefit not only from the proceeds of the dances (which are often considerable after allowing for the expenses) but also from the attendant publicity.

One of the most successful and quite one of the gayest dances was the Masked Ball held at Hutchinson House in aid of the National Association and London Union of Mixed Clubs and Girls' Clubs.

There seemed to be an unusually large number of lovely women present, and many of the masks and head-dresses were brilliant in their design and colouring. One of the prettiest was that worn by Lady Bridget Clark, Chairman of the Ball Committee, and the "judges," who included Viscount Duncannon and Mrs. Gerald Legge, had no easy task in deciding to whom the prizes for the most original and the most beautiful mask should be awarded.

In the end, one of the prizes—half a case of champagne—was split up, and prizes were given for the "most striking" to Baroness Ravensdale—the "most original" to Miss Elizabeth Ward—the "prettiest" to Mary, Duchess of Roxburghe—the "most attractive" to Lady George Scott, and the "most enchanting" to Countess Beatty.

H.E. the Spanish Ambassador gave a dinner-party before the dance and his guests included H.E. the Portuguese Ambassador, the Earl and Countess of Hardwicke, the Duke of Buccleuch, Earl and Countess Beatty, and Ann, Lady Orr-Lewis, whose dress of black lace over pale orchid organza was one of the prettiest I have seen. The Earl of Dudley came with a large party which included Viscount and Viscountess Ednam, the Hon. Peter Ward, the Earl of Wilton, Lady Sykes and the Hon. Mrs. Edward Ward. Others that I saw enjoying the evening were Mr. Christopher and Lady Anne Holland-Martin, Colonel and Mrs. Hugh Rose, Mr. and Mrs. Graham Bailey, and Mr. and Mrs. Frank More-O'Ferrall, the latter looking very pretty in a pale-pink dress.

A COMMITTEE meeting was held in the State Apartments of St. James' Palace to discuss arrangements for the concert which is being given on March 22nd at the Royal Festival Hall in aid of the Y.W.C.A. H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent has graciously consented to attend the concert, at which the London Philharmonic Orchestra will be conducted by Sir Adrian Boult, and Mlle. Monique Haas, the celebrated concert pianist, and Miss Isobel Baillie, the well-known singer, will also appear.

Photo: Lenare.

A charming picture of Lady Ogilvy with her baby daughter, Doune Mabell, who was christened recently. Lady Ogilvy was the former Miss Virginia Ryan, and married Lord Ogilvy in 1952.

The Duchess of Marlborough, as President of the Committee, came up from Woodstock to attend the meeting, and made one of the best and most amusing speeches I have heard for some time. Her suggestion that everyone at the meeting should, on leaving, make a contribution towards the cost of the orchestra to the Hon. Treasurer, Lord Ogilvy, met with overwhelming success, and was possibly encouraged by the spontaneous and generous gesture of Sir Robert Bird (whose wife, Lady Bird, is Chairman), who announced that he would donate half the cost.

Other members of the committee who were present included Countess Fortescue, who is also National President of the Association, the Hon. Isobel Catto, Mrs. Michael Wood, Lady Windstedt, the Hon. Mrs. John Skeffington and Lady Ogilvy.

As I was leaving I met Lady Burbidge, who like myself had worked in St. James' Palace with the B.R.C.S. during the greater part of the war in connection with their organisation for prisoners of war and civilian internees. We both recalled the bare boards, plain trestle tables and wooden chairs, which was all the furniture the State Apartments housed in those far-off days! It was a pleasant contrast to see the fine portraits, crimson damask curtains matching the carpets and wallpaper, and gilded chandeliers and sconces, that have now restored the beautiful rooms to all their grandeur.

Tickets for the concert can be obtained from Y.W.C.A. National Office, 108, Baker Street, London, W.1.

I WENT to a very enjoyable cocktail party given by Mr. and Mrs. Bill Harrison, who were down on a brief visit to London from Staffordshire before setting off on a holiday to South Africa. Their eldest daughter Moya is coming out this summer, and they are giving a dance for her at their home, Wychnor Park, on July 23rd. Moya is at present with a family in Paris, but I hear is eagerly looking forward to her first season.

There was quite a gathering of parents whose daughters are to make their *début* this year, among whom were Mr. and Mrs. Percy Illingworth, Mrs. Ireland-Smith, and Mr. O'Dwyer, who are to give a joint dance for Janet Illingworth, Gillian Ireland-Smith and Sally O'Dwyer at the Guards' Boat Club on June 11th, and Sir John and Lady Child and Mrs. Dennis Russell, who together are giving a dance for their daughters Diana Child and Sally Russell. Also Mrs. Francis Jayne, who is to bring out her daughter Anabel, and Mrs. Nigel Loring, who is giving a dance for her daughter Rosemary with Mrs. Charles Fane and Mrs. Ingram Capper for Angela Fane and Roamine Capper at Hurlingham. Other guests that I saw were Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Quilter and Lady St. John of Bletso.

A VISIT to the exhibition of pictures and works of art on loan from Petworth House at the Wildenstein Galleries is well worth while; included are some fine Turners, a superb Zoffany, as well as works by famous artists of the Dutch and French schools. I was fascinated with the wealth of detail in *The Last Judgement*, by William Blake, in pen and ink, pencil and water-colour. One can also see the finest piece from Petworth—the marble bust of Aphrodite attributed to Praxiteles.

I only wish that all speakers would emulate the Duke of Wellington, who opened the exhibition—his speech was to the point, instructive, amusing, and seemed far too short in consequence. Among the many people whom I saw were the Hon. Mrs. Forbes, with her daughter, Mrs. Reresby Sitwell, Sir Ronald Storrs, Lord Plymouth, Mme. Massigli, looking very chic in black, Mrs. Derek Hague, who told me that she was off to Switzerland to see her schoolgirl daughter, and the Countess of Sefton with Mrs. Rudolph de Trafford.

Helena

AMERICAN WEDDING. Miss Elizabeth Firestone with her bridesmaids and her father, Mr. Harvey S. Firestone, Jr., before her marriage to Mr. Charles Willis, Jr.

EMBASSY PORTRAIT. Sir Roger and Lady Makins admiring the portrait of the Queen presented to the British Embassy in Washington by Mrs. Douglas Chandor, widow of the artist.

WEDDING. Prince Sherban Cantacuzène with his bride, the former Miss Anne Trafford, daughter of the late Major Cecil Trafford, M.C., and of Mrs. Girouard, after their marriage at the Brompton Oratory.

MASKED BALL. Countess Beatty wore this lovely mask at the Ball held at Hutchinson House in aid of the Association and London Union of Mixed Clubs and Girls' Clubs.

MISS SUSAN VIAN, daughter of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Philip Vian and of Lady Vian, announced her engagement in December to Lieutenant Commander Harry Robert Keate, R.N.

MISS VENETIA WEEKS, daughter of Lieut.-General Sir Ronald and Lady Weeks, is engaged to Lieutenant Peter Troubridge, R.N., son of the late Vice-Admiral and of Lady Troubridge.

SUSSEX WEDDING. Lieutenant Laurence Hardy, R.N., younger son of Lieut.-Commander Ronald and Mrs. Hardy, with his bride, the former Rebeka Watson, daughter of Mrs. Geoffrey Barlow and the late Colonel McGreggor Watson, D.S.O.

ANNUAL BALL of the 12th (Yorkshire) Battalion Parachute Regiment, T.A., was held at Thornbury Barracks, Bradford. Major A. Miller, Captain M. R. Wade, Mrs. D. Russell and Major D. Russell. This was the first of a series of annual balls.

The Social Round

AT THE THEATRE with J. C. TREWIN

Three Actresses in a Line

Carnival King

(*Playhouse, Nottingham*)

I HAVE always liked the story that Edward the Second's favourite amusement was to play at "cross and pile"—crying heads and tails on the toss of a coin. It makes a human figure of him—and he has seemed to be one of the remoter kings of English history. It is not very pleasant to go down in record simply as the victim of one of the ghastliest murders ever devised. In the theatre, we have had Marlowe's tragedy and a good modern study by Hugh Ross Williamson, which had only a limited run. Now, however, the poet Henry Treece has written a chronicle which ought—if justice were done—to fix Edward as firmly in playgoers' minds as "Gordon Daviot's" *Richard of Bordeaux* fixed Richard the Second. That was a reasonable play, but I am not sure what would have happened to it without John Gielgud. Henry Treece's chronicle of Edward starts admittedly at a big disadvantage. The two kings are remarkably alike in some ways, and I feel that memories of Richard of Bordeaux may cloud the future of Edward of Carnarvon.

Still, I can report that *Carnival King* has been the best new play of 1954—agreed, not many challengers yet. Certainly this night at Nottingham was an exciting experience, and an answer both to playgoers who shudder at the name of "rep," and who tremble if they are asked to go outside the square mile of the West End. The producer at Nottingham is John Harrison. His imagination and his independence have done wonders: *Carnival King* is a particularly fine feather in his well-plumed cap, though no doubt he would agree that, in Robert Eddison (the king) and Daphne Slater (Isabella the Fair), he has two players of quite uncommon merit.

Mr. Eddison's task has been the harder. The dramatist, resolved neither to vilify Edward nor to whitewash him too freely, presents a vacillating character (true enough, no doubt) that the actor must prop. Robert Eddison props him most gallantly. I forget whether or not he plays "cross and pile," but, at any rate, this was an Edward quite human enough to do so. He is no dummy equipped with a kind of death-rattle of blank verse.

Edward's trouble was his passion for Piers Gaveston, the Gascon who all but ruled England, and who was betrayed and executed by the barons he mocked. In the play, which does not pretend to be historically accurate, it is the Gaveston entanglement that causes the jealous Queen Isabella to turn to Roger Mortimer, and to hound her husband—and his later favourite, Hugh le Despenser—to their deaths.

She appears to have been the "she-wolf" of Gray's poem but, in *Carnival King*, Mr. Treece presents her as a woman who longed for Edward's love. If he had lifted his little finger, she would have taken him from his enemies at the last—even from snowbound Kenilworth. But Edward was a stone wall of obstinacy. He would not move for the queen he had scorned, and nothing could save him from death. On Mr. Treece's lines—and the dramatist would agree that this is not more than his personal surmise—Daphne Slater played Isabella with subtlety and power that were good to see. She has become a fine actress. Connoisseurs know her worth, and when there must be another "discovery," I suggest Miss Slater as a candidate.

Other parts were clearly and confidently played. I was glad to see Duncan Ross—who used to be in the Stratford company—as one of Mr. Treece's own Soldiers' Chorus. The other Spearman of England was John W. Wayne. They made an agreeably anachronistic pair. *Carnival King* will need the usual adjustment of nuts-and-bolts (and a very long look at the epilogue). But it is a chronicle-play of feeling and good workmanship, not a dubious scuttle-and-scuffle. I hope to see it in London.

THERE IS A TIDE in the affairs of musical comedy which, having passed the flood, begins to flow the other way. London has seen many excellent American musicals; this summer Broadway is to see *The Boy Friend*, now running at Wyndham's Theatre. Vida Hope, who produced it, and Sandy Wilson, who wrote it, are seen going over the script together. Our congratulations to them both!

No Other Verdict

(*Duchess*)

JACK ROFFEY'S play is a competent effort to keep one guessing until the end of the evening. All round me people were guessing obediently, like children ready to sing the chorus after the funny man at the pantomime. I guessed wrongly; my neighbour looked wise but said nuffin'; and a horribly omniscient man in front of me had the right answer.

Well, what can I tell you? The murder takes place outside an old mill-house—a luxurious place, it looked to me, with a vast array of drinks—somewhere in Buckinghamshire. One man is suspected. He is suspected so much that we know he cannot possibly have had anything to do with it, and must have been cataloguing his stamps in Aberystwyth at the time of the murder. Every now and then, a tapestry is pulled aside in the top left-hand corner of the room, so that we can hear fragments of evidence at the trial. All very nice; splendidly helpful, I am sure. There it is. The dramatist keeps on saying: "Come along now!" We keep on thinking. And by-and-by it is all over, a criminal has been found, and we move out into a peculiarly frigid night.

The acting? Yes. John Arnatt, who had a better part not long ago in the *Henry VI.* trilogy at the Old Vic, is here a detective, and he seems to enjoy the work. Charles Lloyd Pack, a very good player indeed, puts the right face on a not very good part. Everybody else behaves properly. Benedicta Leigh, who is on the stage for hardly two minutes, does even more. She presents a character as though she believes in it. I hope some of my colleagues have noticed Miss Leigh. She seems to me to jerk the pasteboard into life; it lasts, as I say, for only a minute or two, and there we are, away again on some routine matter. The verdict? Let me say simply that this is another crime-play, but not—repeat *not*—by Mrs. Christie.

Anna Lucasta

(*Hippodrome*)

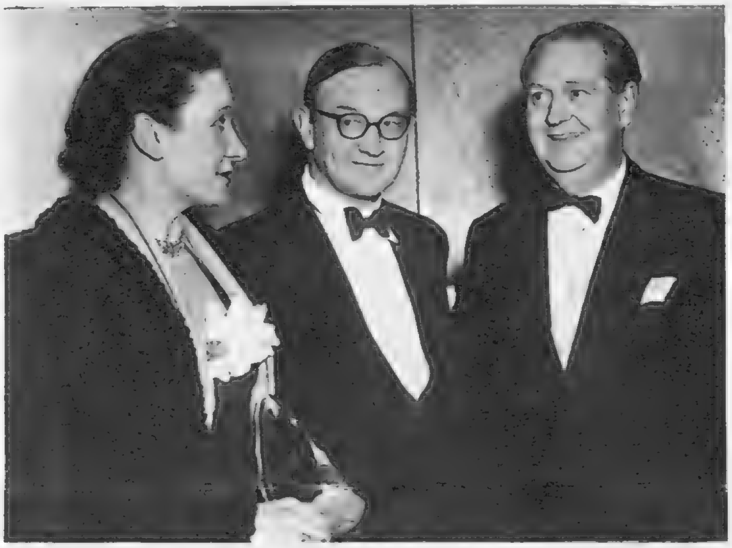
IT is a week for actresses. In the manner of a racing tipster, I have given you Daphne Slater at Nottingham and Benedicta Leigh at the Duchess. Let me turn it into a trio, and give you Isabelle Cooley at the Hippodrome. She is Anna Lucasta in the old play—not so old, but we are used to it by now—Philip Yordan's study of a Brooklyn street-walker, who finds the right kind of happiness. Hilda Simms was the Anna in 1947–48, and Isabelle Cooley remarkably does not suffer by comparison. She can keep still. She acts with her eyes (and her mind; watch her as she listens to the family discussion). And she can phrase and point a speech without having to wind up the machinery to do it.

For her sake, the revival is worth seeing. The rest of the Negro cast is serviceable. No one gets in the way of the piece, and I was glad to meet Reggie Fenderson as the bar-tender from the cast of six or seven years ago. One actor I missed was Frederick O'Neal, that booming husky of the Lucastas. But Anna is as she has always been, the making of the play, and very rightly Isabelle Cooley makes it.

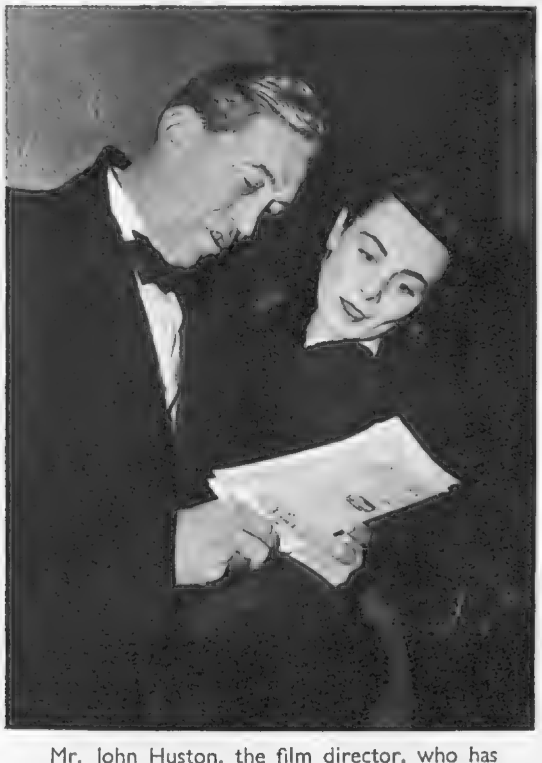
Well-known Dublin first-nighters Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Ganly, and *right*, Miss Moira Leverty, the novelist and playwright.

More regular first-nighters at the Dublin world première: Lord and Lady Nelson, with Mrs. John Riordan.

The Countess Fitzwilliam with the Hon. Richard Stanley, brother of Lord Derby, and Mr. William Noyek.



Sir George and Lady Mahon and Mr. Roger Green were chatting together here during one of the play's intervals.



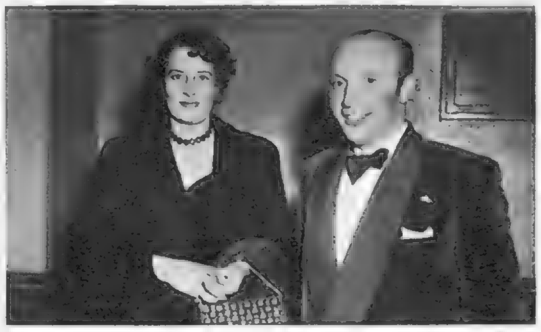
Mr. John Huston, the film director, who has taken a house in Co. Kildare for the hunting season, with Mrs. Huston.

FASHIONABLE FIRST NIGHT IN DUBLIN

The world première of Robert Morley's new play, *Hippo Dancing*, which opened on February 1st at the Olympia Theatre in Dublin, was decidedly a gala occasion. The play itself, which stars Robert Morley and Brenda de Banzie, was given a wonderful reception, which augurs well for its success with West End audiences when the provincial tour ends in March. Many well-known Dublin first-nighters attended an after-the-show celebration party at the Shelbourne Hotel. The play, which is directed by Peter Ashmore, is presented by H. M. Tennent Ltd.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Charles Fennell.

Mrs. Eric Horsburgh-Porter and Mrs. Marjorie Plunket at the Shelbourne Hotel celebration party.



Prince Ferdinand d'Ardia Caracciolo and Princess Caracciolo, of The Island, Co. Waterford.

Sir Francis Chesney
(William Mervyn).

Charley's Aunt from
Brazil.

The importunate Spettigue
(Philip Stainton).

Donna Lucia
(Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies).

"I say, you chaps, don't play the giddy goat!"
Simon Lack as Jack, and David Evans as Charles.

"SKETCH" THEATRE PREVIEW

Charley's Aunt

YEAR by year, in the theatre or on celluloid, it is revived. When Pinero's farces are almost forgotten, *Charley's Aunt*, by Brandon Thomas, first written in 1892, is still going strong. The new production by Sir John Gielgud, with *décor* by Motley, opens to-day at the New Theatre after a short spell on the road. John Mills is a very good-humoured old lady, always, as our pictures show, a little worried; Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies brings the majesty of Queen Katherine and the humour of Beatrice to Charley's real aunt (there, now! We've given away the plot!); Philip Stainton is an importunate Spettigue; Jennifer Wright, Natasha Parry and Joy Rodgers enrich the old piece with beauty, David Evans and Simon Lack contribute grace and good looks, while Eliot Makeham and William Mervyn add experience. None of the young men behaves as if Oxford tutors ever expected any work, or Oxford tradesmen any pay. Ah, well! Those were the days. It is a tuppence-coloured costume-piece of rompery, without, we are bound to reveal, a serious thought in the whole evening.

Photographed by Houston Rogers.

Joy Rodgers, Jennifer Wright and Natasha Parry.

"Won't you try Auntie's smelling-salts?"

Lord Fancourt Babberley (John Mills).

" Have you forgotten that dance . . . ? " Simon Lack and Jennifer Wright.

" I resign to Sir Francis all claims to Charley's Aunt " : Natasha Parry as Ella.

The trials of a female impersonator.

" My hat ! My hat ! " David Evans, Jennifer Wright, Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies, Simon Lack, John Mills, Philip Stainton, Eliot Makeham (as Brassett) and Joy Rodgers take tea in the garden.

Strictly not St. Trinian's

THE pictures on this page are by Ronald Searle. They were painted in the autumn of last year during a holiday at Taormina, with the exception of the drawing of the clerical gentlemen, which was made in Rome. There is not a school-girl in sight, not a vulture on a Gothic battlement, not a prognathous jaw. They were made by the Ronald Searle who held a one-man show every year at the Leicester Galleries from 1945 to 1950, and who hopes to hold another some time this year. For St. Trinian's is only one of the creations of this diverse and talented artist.

He began his artistic career as a choirboy, when the vicar asked him to do some posters for a bazaar. At the age of thirteen, he began evening classes at an Art School, and, in two years, was drawing cartoons for the local paper to finance his studies. At nineteen, he went into the Army; there was a war. He was an Architectural Draughtsman Class III ; it was as low as he could get in that trade, and as high as he remained : "My one great failure," he calls it. "Or perhaps it was a success." The Army took him from place to place and left him in Burma for three years as a prisoner of the Japanese. When he was released, at the age of twenty-six, he had evolved a personal style as a painter that was born, not out of "influences," but out of experience.

This last painting holiday in Italy is typical of his method of work. The experience comes first. In June and July, he painted nothing, but soaked in the sun, and visited museums and art galleries; his taste is catholic. Then he returned to Italy in September, spent a month dismally in bad weather, and began, in November, to wander about the place with an enormous sketch-block, getting in the way of the fishermen, and using, on one occasion, the fresh black ink of a newly-caught cuttlefish to sketch the head of one of the men who caught it.

He works in water-colour, gouache—in anything but oils. For he needs another ten years, he says, to cope with oils; they would leave him no time to cope with anything else. Since, in addition to his duties as a husband and the father of twins, he is a staff artist for *Punch*, and, with his wife, runs a small publishing firm, *Perpetua, Ltd.*, the oils have to wait. As for St. Trinian's, he says callously, it is dead as far as he is concerned; he killed off the whole school in his last book. Since, however, a film tentatively entitled *The Belles of St. Trinian's* is even now under production, it is possible that, like Frankenstein, he may find that he has created something that is already beyond his power to destroy.

"Please Forward": by Joyce Dennys.

Faith, Hope—and a Chignon

"Poor Henrietta," said Mrs. Whinebite.

MY DEAR ROBERT,

Last week Faith came round to see me looking so peculiar that I knew at once something dreadful must have happened. I put down my trowel and led her gently to the sofa in the drawing-room. "If it 's a quarrel with the Conductor——" I said.

"It isn't."

"If it 's another baby, remember They Bring Their Love With Them."

Faith opened her eyes, which were swimming, as they say, in tears. She is the only woman I know who can look beautiful when she is crying. "You know I 'm simply longing to have another baby, Henrietta," she said.

"Then what is it, darling?"

"It 's my hair," said Faith, and she buried her face in the sofa cushions.

I looked at her shining golden chignon in horror. Could it be possible that Fate should deal this cruellest of blows? Terrible visions of Bald Patches—Toupées—even Health Service Wigs rose before my eyes. I knelt down beside the sofa and took her hand in mine. "You mustn't give up hope, Faith," I said. "There are all sorts of things they can do nowadays. Even if the bald patches grow in white you can always have them Touched Up."

Before Faith could answer, the Conductor burst into the room. "Has she told you?" he cried hoarsely. There were shadows under his eyes as though he had been sleeping badly.

"You must try not to worry," I said.

"IT IS A WOMAN'S CROWNING GLORY," shouted the Conductor.

Faith sat up on the sofa. The tears were still wet on her cheeks, but her eyes were flashing blue fire. "Why shouldn't I cut off my hair if I want to," she said. "It 's my hair."

"Ours," said the Conductor.

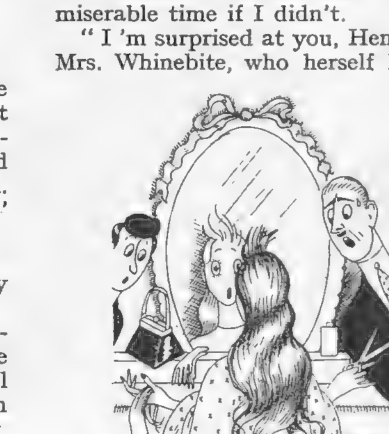
They were glaring at each other, their noses almost touching. I sat down and sighed. So it was for this I had left my forget-me-not seedlings half-planted. I thought of them—frail creatures, wrenched from their old surroundings, their delicate roots exposed and at the mercy of the elements. How brave they had been—how obliging—how friendly—seeding themselves, unheralded, unsung, in that corner. Was this to be the reward for their valour?

"So you see, Henrietta," Faith was saying, "we thought we would ask you to decide for us."

But I refused to do this. As Charles says, there are some things married couples must do for themselves.

Before long there was a sort of Montague and Capulet feud raging in the place which came to be known as the Great Bun Worry. Faith and the Conductor spent a good deal of their time canvassing, and Faith even persuaded the Anti-Buns to wear a little pale blue rosette. Lady B. and Charles and I were Independents to begin with, but after a time we were compelled to abandon our neutrality, Lady B. and Charles joining the Buns, and I the Anti-Buns, not because I really wanted Faith to cut off her hair, but because I knew she 'd give me a miserable time if I didn't.

"I 'm surprised at you, Henrietta," said Mrs. Whinebite, who herself has a large, untidy bun hanging half-way down her back, with hair-pins sticking out of it like porcupines' quills.



I knew she was sorry she had done it.

"Henrietta, as a doctor's wife, knows long hair is unhygienic," said Mrs. Savernack, passing her hand over her Eton Crop.

"Views which, I may state, are not held by the Doctor," said Mrs. Whinebite, with a nasty smile.

"Well, you see," I suggested gently, "Charles feels that when it comes to Faith, you can't have too much of a good thing."

"Poor Henrietta," said Mrs. Whinebite, and turned into the fish shop.

There really seemed no reason why the Great Bun Worry should ever come to an end, for neither Faith nor the Conductor would budge an inch, so I was almost relieved when Faith rang me up to say she was at the end of her tether and had made an appointment with Ambrose, the smartest hairdresser in our Cathedral City, and asked me to go there with her that afternoon to give her support, because the Conductor hadn't been told.

Ambrose, who has looked after Faith's hair for years, greeted her warmly. "That chignon is really delightful," he said. "You must feel now that it was worth the trouble of growing your hair."

"Well, it isn't worth the trouble of brushing and sticking pins into it every morning," said Faith. "I 've come to have it cut off."

"No! No!" cried Ambrose, and he reeled back against the wall of the cubicle.

"Now, don't you start," said Faith, and she sat down and began taking the pins out of her hair. "Short hair is good for business."

"I am an artist first and a business man second," said Ambrose with dignity.

"Nonsense," said Faith, and she took out the last pin. Her hair tumbled down like a shining golden curtain.

"I won't do it," said Ambrose, looking like somebody who is prepared to go to the stake for his beliefs.

"I believe my husband 's been talking to you," said Faith.

"I positively will not do it!" said Ambrose loudly.

Faith snatched a pair of scissors out of his hand and cut a great jagged chunk of hair from her head. Ambrose gave a cry and covered his eyes. Faith sat looking at the shining hair in her hand and then at her reflection in the glass over the basin, and I knew she was sorry she had done it. "Now you 'll have to do something," she said in a shaking voice.

Ambrose did a lovely job of work. When, four hours later, Faith and I staggered out into the street, she was looking very lovely, but as I told her, she 'd been looking lovely when she came in, so it wasn't all that exciting. Of course, she was delighted with herself and kept tossing her curls and saying she felt as free as air, and how wonderful it was going to be not having a pig-tail at night. "You 'll have to pin up all those curls," I said sourly. I 'd had a tiring afternoon and there was still the Conductor to face.

Faith pretended she didn't care what the Conductor said, but I could see she was nervous, and she talked in a high, excited voice all the way home. When we got to the house we crept in like Gunpowder Plot Conspirators, and Faith began doing things to her face in the hall looking-glass. Then she squared her shoulders and marched defiantly into the music-room.

The Conductor was sitting sadly beside his gramophone, wondering where Faith could have got to, and it struck me that it was just her luck to have Grieg's piano concerto for her entrance. When he saw her the Conductor got up and came slowly towards her. I was trembling so violently that all the china in the cabinet near which I was standing began to rattle like castanets. The Conductor took both Faith's hands in his. "Oh, Faith," he said, "Oh, Faith, darling, how beautiful you look!"

Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend,

HENRIETTA.

"Oh, Faith, darling. How beautiful you look."

The White Queen (Margaret Rutherford) : "Speak in French when you can't think of the English for a thing!"

Alice Through the Looking Glass

"O, frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!" we chortled in our joy, when we heard that *Alice* was opening yesterday (February 9th) at the Princes Theatre. And there it is—with Alice and Humpty Dumpty, the White Queen and the Red Queen, the Walrus and the Carpenter, and all the rest of Carroll's colourful characters, "as large as life, and twice as natural." Kenneth Rowell's settings and costumes are a delight, and Felicity Douglas's new adaptation, presented by Ralph Birch, is certainly going to be highly popular with children from eight to eighty!

Photographed by Houston Rogers.

The Red Queen (Binnie Hale) : "Why, sometimes I 've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

The White Knight (Michael Denison): "Ssh! I 'm inventing something."

Alice (Carol Marsh) : "There 's no use trying —one *can't* believe impossible things!"

The Red Knight (Griffith Jones) : "She came and shouted in my ear."

Humpty Dumpty (Michael Denison) with Alice. "With a name like yours, you might be any shape, almost."

The Tiger-Lily (Walter Crisham) delivers an admonishment to Alice : "And don't forget —walk backwards!"

Tweedledum and Tweedledee (Griffith Jones and Michael Denison) "agreed to have a battle."

We Take Off Our Hat To . . .

JACK TAYLOR

an English Rousseau

JACK TAYLOR is twenty-four years old. He was born into a family of four boys and seven girls; they lived in the East End of London. At school, Jack was a problem child. He refused to pay much attention to the lessons with which the teachers bothered him, and was only happy when they left him alone with a painting-book and colours. For he liked to paint, and to make things with his hands.

He left school at fourteen, and went from job to job, looking for one that would satisfy him. He scraped his shillings together to buy oil-paints and Swedish hardboard (which is cheaper than canvas). Because he could not afford to buy brushes, he made his own.

Last year he was working as a builder's labourer, carting away rubble from a building outside the Redfern Gallery. One of his mates mocked him in a friendly way. "You call yourself a painter," his mate said. "They buy paintings in that place. Go on in and show them some." So, when he could stand the mocking no longer, he went in and showed them.

This is not quite a fairy-story. The Redfern Gallery did not buy all Jack's paintings for £1,000,000. Instead, they asked him to bring them some more in six months' time. And then they began to sell the pictures for him. Barbara, Countess of Moray, bought one. So did Stephen Spender, John Mills, Richard Attenborough, and a great many others. So far, in a year, some forty of his pictures have been sold, and you may find them as far afield as Rome and Hollywood. Alfred Rodrigues, the choreographer, was so excited by the picture he bought that he decided Jack must design the décor and costumes for the new ballet he is creating for the Sadler's Wells Theatre. Jack himself had never seen a ballet until we took him with us to the Wells last Friday week, when he was much moved by Rodrigues' *Blood Wedding*.

Meanwhile he has been able to give up his job as a builder's labourer. He helped to make the masks Loudon Sainthill designed for *Coq d'Or*, and walked on in it as a Negro, finding swift social promotion later, when he walked on in *Turandot* as a mandarin. If he can save enough money he hopes to be able to go away for a while on a painting holiday, but, since he has to care for a wife and two delightful children, this may take some time.

Three of his pictures are reproduced on this page. It is a strange, half-oriental world he paints, half-sad in spite of its bright colours. The sea loops into the land, and the city fills the crevices of the mountains. It is a world of the mind. Jack has never been out of England, seldom out of London; indeed, when he was evacuated during the war, he walked 34 miles (in the wrong direction) of his way back before he was picked up. Those who know his painting are afraid that a trip abroad might spoil it, but this is not his fear; he does not paint things outside, and his dream world is too strong to be destroyed by foreign sunlight.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Harold White.

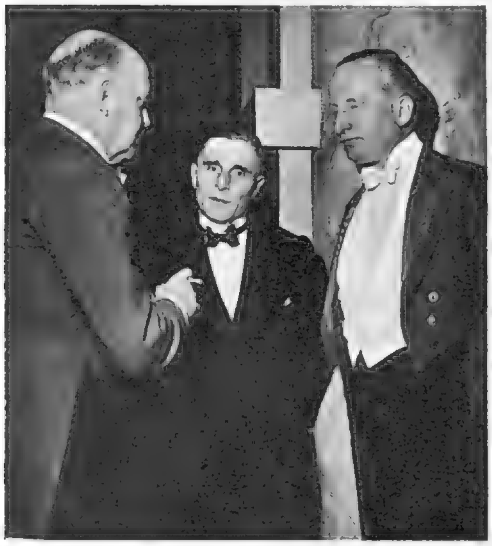
Diplomatic Hostesses: Signora Manlio Brosio

This delightful study of the wife of the Italian Ambassador was taken in one of the lovely reception rooms at the Italian Embassy in Grosvenor Square. Signora Brosio has only been in England for two years, but she has formed a great affection for the country and the people. "Everyone is so kind, everywhere I go," she says. "And now I find that when I have been away on holiday, I am always happy to come back to London." Life in diplomatic circles is very full, and she loves it, but there is never very much time to spare for private activities. But whenever she can manage it, she likes to wander around the by-ways of the city, enjoying the unexpected old-world characteristics of prettily-painted mews, cottages and quaint old pubs, and the very special charm of London's green parks and tree-lined squares.

Mrs. and Air-Commodore J. Warburton, with Mrs. R. L. Kippenberger.

At the supper table: Mrs. James Gillam and Mr. Mostyn Owen.

On the dance floor: Lord Gisborough and Miss Elizabeth Haldane.



Mr. Geoffrey Smith, Mr. George Windridge and Commander Lycett Green.

Air-Commodore R. L. Kippenberger dancing with Miss C. Lycett Green.

Miss Kathleen Dagenham at supper with Mr. John Fontaine.

Attractive trio watching the dancing were Mrs. John Russell, Mrs. B. Gundry and Mrs. W. E. Harbord.

The York and Ainsty South Hunt Ball

On January 28th the lovely old Assembly Rooms at York were again the venue for the very popular annual ball held by the York and Ainsty South Hunt. There is always a big influx of visitors from far and wide on these occasions, and many of the members of the York and Ainsty North Hunt are always among the guests. We saw Miss Kitty Rhodes and Colonel Stephen Rhodes, two of the North's most staunch supporters, talking with Colonel G. H. Aykroyd and Mr. George Windridge, the Huntsman, who has been with the Hunt for twenty years. Colonel Aykroyd is a Joint Master of the York and Ainsty South with Commander Lycett Green, Mr. Eric Fawcett and Mr. Geoffrey Smith. It was a highly successful occasion, colourful as only a Hunt ball can be, when the pink coats of the men make such a lovely foil for the ladies, beautiful dresses of the ladies, and everyone seemed suitably regretful when the festivities drew to a close.

Brigadier Swettenham, Mrs. N. Fitzroy and Mr. A. Yates.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Chris Ware.

Mr. Geoffrey Smith, a Joint Master, with Mrs. Anthony Yates.

Nearest the camera : Miss Ann Branston and Mr. Timothy Kitson.

The stately Assembly Rooms were a gay sight as guests danced one of the many popular Scottish reels.

Mr. and Mrs. Ossie White with Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Lupton.

Huntsman Mr. George Windridge chats with Colonel G. H. Aykroyd.

Colonel Aykroyd, Miss Kitty Rhodes, Mrs. J. Gillam and Colonel S. Rhodes.

Mrs. and Mr. E. Harbord, Viscountess Morpeth and Major J. Russell.

TELEVISION TOPICS

EAMONN ANDREWS.

NOELLE MIDDLETON.

SALLY BARNES.

PETER DIMMOCK.

T.V. PERSONALITIES: There are no half-measures about Dublin-born EAMONN ANDREWS' popularity. Chiefly known as Chairman of *What's My Line*, he has, in his time, appeared in twelve different programmes during a single week. His compatriot, NOELLE MIDDLETON, has steadily increased in popularity as a guest announcer. Her finest effort so far has been her tasteful and adroit performance as *commère* of the recent *Elizabethan Evening*. Another comparatively new television star is SALLY BARNES, who appeared in her first show, Henry Hall's *Face the Music*, last September, and proved herself to be a versatile *comedienne*, with just that touch of pathos that adds up to genius. Finally, here is PETER DIMMOCK, Assistant Head of Television Outside Broadcasts. He is one of the B.B.C.'s ablest men, and serves the viewer both on and off the screen. He is a popular commentator of sporting events, and was responsible for the superb television broadcast from Westminster Abbey of the Coronation Service.

From Aulis to Donaghreagh

By CYRIL BUTCHER

IT is profitless to become too convinced of the omnipotence of television, for from time to time it becomes quite obvious that not everything suits it. *Sacrifice to the Wind*, by André Obey (translated by John Whiting), was a case in point. I found the play not entirely without merit, and managed to refrain from resentment at the suspicion that I was expected to froth at the mouth about its ART and its SIGNIFICANCE. But it was a vehicle for sound more than vision; full of lengthy argument and precious little action.

One is ushered into the black, featureless interior of Agamemnon's tent, near the harbour of Aulis. The Greek fleet lies, waiting for a favourable wind. Calchas, the High Priest, has declared that The Gods demand from the King the sacrifice of his sixteen-year-old daughter, before they will arrange to waft the fleet to Troy. Agamemnon's allies, Menelaus and Ulysses, try to persuade him to defy this superstitious nonsense, but he refuses to let anything stand in the way of his ambition. Consequently poor Iphigenia is duly sacrificed. There is also the ghost of a dead soldier who spends considerable verbiage in coming to the conclusion that one ought to love one's enemies. It was a play, in fact, which was full of gratifying sentiments, but which left one yearning in vain for action.

In his production Rudolph Cartier tried hard—too hard—to overcome this defect by keeping his actors on the trot, and his cameras flicking from angle to angle. The result was a feeling of restlessness rather than movement. I found the performances more appealing to the ear than the eye—especially the Agamemnon of Andrew Cruickshank, which was full of pleasant sonority.

Tovarich, by Jacques Deval. Was it corny? Yes. Was it dated? Yes. Was it amusing? Quite delightful. Ann Todd and Peter Cushing played the Russian Prince and his Grand Duchess wife who were reduced by the Red Revolution to a life of penury in Paris, and entered the domestic service of a rich banker as maid and butler.

Miss Todd needs no recommendation as an actress. Her touch was light but firm, and she never once gave me the feeling—as some other famous artists have done—that she was slumming by appearing in television. Mr. Cushing has been adjudged the Outstanding Actor of the year by the *Daily Mail* panel. On his showing in *Tovarich* he would have had my vote too. The production was in those bewilderingly agile hands of Eric Fawcett, who has returned to the B.B.C. fold after being seconded for a year to carry out experimental work in other directions.

The Chameleon, by Margaret Luce. Was it corny? Yes. Was it dated? Yes. Was it amusing? Oh dear, oh dear! It was all about a nitwitted young thing who flutters between the conventional boorish Socialist and the conventionally brainless Conservative, without being able to make up her mind to marry either of them. In the end, of course, she gets the strong, silent, cynical hero. This sort of thing can pass muster, only if there is really witty dialogue and sparkling performances. Neither was forthcoming.

NOW for three of the next fortnight's plays. They are all quite different from one another, and I hesitate to predict about any of them.

To-morrow night there is—for one performance only—*Day for Happiness*, an Italian play by Cesare Meano, translated by Jordan Lawrence. Signora Clotilda is celebrating her eightieth birthday. All is not well, for her house is mortgaged to the hilt and money is running short. But not a hint of this must reach the various members of the family who arrive to pay their respects to the grand old lady. They in their turn have a fixed determination to keep from her one or two skeletons which are rattling in their cupboards.

Queen's Folly, by Elswyth Thane, which is scheduled for February 14th and 18th spans nearly 400 years. Queen Elizabeth I. bestows on Anthony Brand for loyal service land and money with which he builds a fine new house named—at her suggestion—"Queen's Folly." She also presents him with her portrait, which for ever after is hung over the mantel in the drawing-room, being solemnly toasted at each anniversary of Elizabeth's birthday. What befalls the Brand family in their passage through the centuries provides an amalgam of mystery, adventure and romance which may turn out a producer's showpiece—or headache.

The following week—February 21st and 25th—brings us *Boyd's Shop*, by St. John Ervine. This is a gentle comedy full of deliciously distilled malice. It is set in Donaghreagh, a small seaside town in Ulster. The social life of this community centres round a grocer's shop run by Andrew Boyd, who is the last of a long line of grocers—honest, God-fearing tradesmen who have built up a tradition of square dealing. But a go-getting young man has taken the shop opposite to set up a rival business. It also turns out that ill-disposed tongues are saying that the local parson is old and tired, and should retire in favour of that nice young Mr. Dunwoody, who is so full of up-to-date, practical ideas about religion.

Out of these two comparatively simple news items is evolved an amazingly complicated web of circumstances. And really it is most astonishing that it all sorts itself out with a minimum of broken heads.

Specially drawn for "THE SKETCH" by Anton.

"AND THIS IS MISS BLENKINSOP OF OUR MATTRESS-TESTING DEPARTMENT."

AT THE CINEMA with C. A. LEJEUNE

Love Laughs at Lotteries

The Love Lottery
(Gaumont)

THE LOVE LOTTERY is not the kind of comedy one normally associates with Ealing Studios, home of *Whisky Galore*, *The Lavender Hill Mob* and *Passport to Pimlico*.

It is in Technicolor, for one thing; rather pretty, pastel Technicolor. Most of the action takes place in an imaginary town, somewhere beyond the blue horizon. There are dream sequences, with vast marble halls, and sometimes a pagoda, a minaret, or a Disney-like castle in the background. And then there is a theme-song, orchestrated with that curious, reedy tone that throbs through the credit titles of so many Hollywood pictures.

It may be You
Dreams can come true,

runs the lyric of this theme-song. And that, when all is said and done, is the essential plot of *The Love Lottery*.

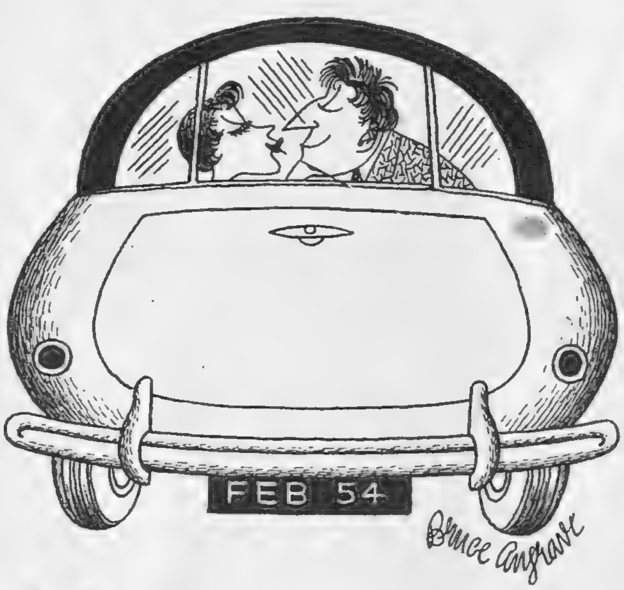
The hero, who looks remarkably like David Niven (and in fact *is* David Niven), is a Hollywood film-star named Rex Allerton, whose affluent and successful career is one long round of misery. Screaming hordes of fans chase him in real life, and tear him to pieces in his dreams. He is obsessed with the idea of taking a vacation in Europe and getting away from it all. One day he hears that the studios are organising a search to find the perfect mate for Fang, the Wonder Dog. Why not, suggests Rex, have a competition to find the perfect mate for Rex, the Wonder Boy? He'll undertake to marry the winner.

The suggestion is a joke, of course, but it doesn't stay a joke for long. Hiding from his fans, as he thinks, in the peaceful, old-world town of Tremaggio, he falls in love with a wonderful woman, who tricks him, as wonderful women are apt to do. Jane—for that is her artless name—is really the crack international expert of the International Syndicate of Computation, which is specially concerned with lotteries. And before he knows what is happening, Rex has lost a vast sum of money to the Syndicate at the gaming tables, and agreed to settle his debts by becoming the first prize in the World Lottery of All Time.

The result is a frolic as far-flung as it is far-fetched; with women all the world over bidding for the Wonder Boy. There are touches in the film that are really funny—I particularly liked the Chinese poster of Mr. Niven, with tilted Oriental eyes to give him extra handsomeness—but it isn't Ealing's normal sort of fun, and it comes as no surprise to find that the screen-play is the work of a Hollywood writer.

To me the most attractive thing about *The Love Lottery*—apart from France's fascinating Anne Vernon, who plays the mathematical expert—is the location. A great part of the film was shot in the Province of Como, in Italy, and the wonderful blue waters of the lake, the sun-drenched villas, the hazy mountains shimmering in the heat of summer, seem a miracle of beauty to a shivering Londoner on a grey February day.

ANGRAVE'S ALPHABET



C for Carpet

CARPET: *One who is appreciated in an automobile.*

Front Page Story
(Warner)

THERE is no theme-song for *this* British picture. If there were to be, I'd suggest *Little Man, You've Had a Busy Day*; except that to describe craggy Jack Hawkins as "little" would be a terminological inexactitude.

Mr. Hawkins appears as Grant, the news editor of London's *Daily World*, a newspaper of vast enterprise and colossal circulation. Grant leads a frenzied life in spite of his multitude of minions; for the editor of *The Daily World* appears to be an office recluse, spending all his time in conference, and the assistant news editor (Derek Farr) indulges a nice taste in women and waistcoats, and seems less designed by nature to help than hinder.

On the day in question, Grant is more than ordinarily hard-pressed. To begin with, he is tired and needs a holiday, which makes him horrid to his wife (Elizabeth Allan) at breakfast, and leaves her determined to take the afternoon 'plane to Paris, even if she has to go alone on her vacation. At the office he finds himself involved in following up a number of hunches, any one of which may provide a front-page story. Before the day is over, he has made *The Daily World* more or less responsible for the arrest of an atom bomb scientist, caught in the act of slipping secrets to a foreign Power; for the death in a street accident of a young woman (Eva Bartok) acquitted of the mercy-killing of her husband; for the paper's adoption of a family of homeless children, whose Mum has died in hospital and whose Dad is detained in Dartmoor; and for printing the premature news (presumably corrected in later editions) of the death of Mrs. Grant in a disaster to the London-Paris 'plane.

Nor is this all. Grant also finds time to deal efficiently with the falling birthrate, a protest meeting of outsize women at the Albert Hall, and the discovery that his wife has been carrying-on with the assistant editor. Nor does breath fail him when an idealistic but distinctly intoxicated reporter breaks all the glass in the door of the news-room to tell the assembled employees that journalists are little better than murderers. On this occasion—with stiff upper lip, having just learnt of his wife's presumed death—he makes quite a speech.

Front Page Story is a muddled picture, and some of its arguments are terribly wobbly. Lawyers, I fancy, may listen wryly to the illogical arguments in the murder trial. Journalists who have frequented news-rooms may object that it is unusual, to say the least of it, to find a family of children, however wrongly evicted, encouraged to spend a day eating ice-cream, playing hop-scotch and throwing darts among the type-writers. To some people, the news editor's big speech about the duties of the Press will make no sense at all, and it may be thought that Grant, however sorely tempted to mouth an editorial, might have better served the Fourth Estate by getting on solidly with the job of bedding the first edition.

All the same, it does not do to ignore a film with Jack Hawkins in the leading part. Mr. Hawkins has always been a good actor. Within recent years he has become, not only an intensely popular actor, but a very good actor indeed. In particular, his scenes here with the children are little master-pieces of quiet handling; the child reaps the reward which the grown-up actor has sown.

A word of praise, too, must go to the director, Gordon Parry, for the final shape in which he presents his issue of *The Daily World*. A day in a newspaper office may not be very much like the day shown in *Front Page Story*, but the end-product is not so far removed from the paper we prop up against the cruet or the coffee-pot at breakfast. In the last instance, the film achieves proportion, and the make-up of the news, with its various stories in their proper columns, is its greatest triumph. I have wondered—how would it have been to show the paper first, fresh from the hand of the newsboy: *then* flash back to tell us how that particular issue came to be printed? Too documentary? Maybe, but if I had been a film writer, I'd have risked it. After all, that is the way most people take their newspapers; reading the day after about the day before.

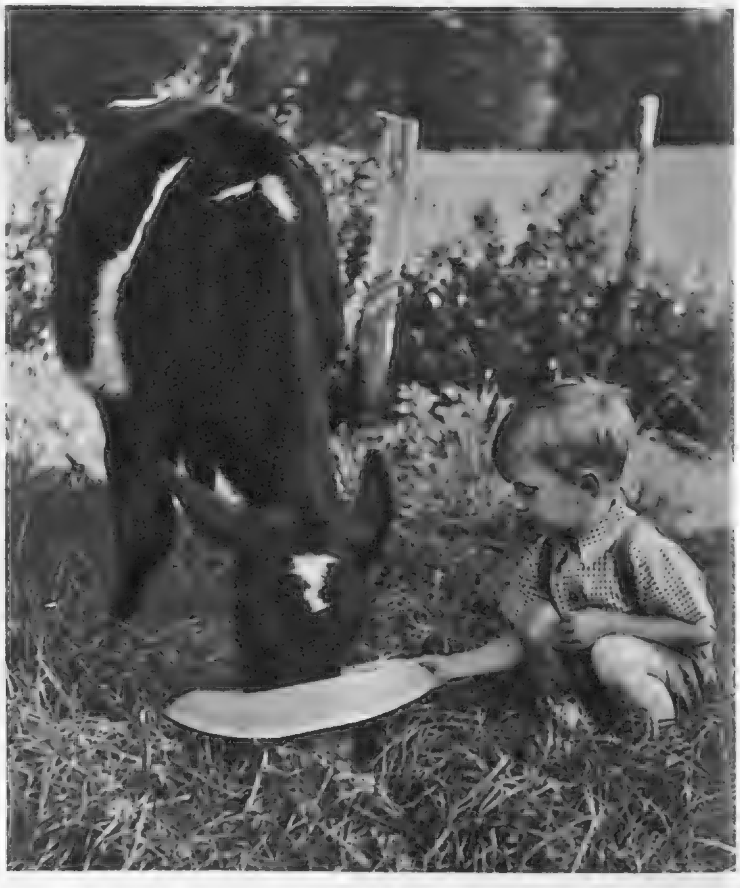
Photographed by Hamilton Walter.

QUEEN GUINEVERE PLUS FOUR

Life has been getting steadily busier for lovely actress Jean Lodge since she gave up modelling and stage-acting to go into films. During the next few months she will be seen in five films in this country : *Dangerous Voyage*, *The Accused*, *Silent Witness*, *Johnny on the Spot* and *The Black Knight*, in which she plays the part of Queen Guinevere. Miss Lodge, who is married to writer-producer Alfred Shaughnessy, stepson of Sir Piers Legh, will be remembered by TV viewers for her rôle in the recent production of *Black Chiffon*. Her spare-time occupations? "Painting in oils and reading ancient history"!

The author photographed with his family in the grounds of his lovely home in Stinchcombe : Evelyn Waugh, Harriet, Septimus, James, Mrs. Waugh, Maria, Margaret and Auberon Alexander, who recently won a classical scholarship at Downside.

Evelyn Waugh poses by one of the fine pieces of ornamental statuary which enhance the beauty of the garden at Piers Court.



Septimus, the baby of the family, is immensely proud at being allowed to feed the calf, quite alone and unaided.

At Home with Evelyn Waugh

Piers Court at Stinchcombe, in Gloucestershire, has been the home of Evelyn Waugh since 1937. Originally burned down in 1645 by Prince Rupert during his march on Berkeley Castle, about six miles from Piers Court, the house was rebuilt shortly afterwards in its present form. During the war years, when Mr. Waugh was abroad, the lovely old place was used as a convent. Mrs. Waugh manages the 50-acre farm attached to the property, and the cows, pigs and chickens provide endless fun for the younger children.

Photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Barry Swaebe.

Our Fashion Portfolio

by NORAH OWEN

For Spring Days Ahead

What could be more useful and attractive for casual wear in the Spring days ahead than this plaid jacket in cashmere doeskin, in shades of brown, beige and ice-blue? Price about 20 gns. The ice-blue bowler, £1 15s. 9d., matches the sweater-blouse, 4½ gns. The snuff-brown wrap-over skirt costs 5½ gns. All are from Wetherall.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Denis Hughes-Gilbey.

OUR FASHION PORTFOLIO (continued)

Spring Goes to Your Head....

This little black straw bonnet, trimmed with pink blossoms, has a matching necklace of flowers, strewn on a black velvet band. From Renée Pavy, Davies Street.

Left : Trim and beautifully shaped. A tailored hat to wear with suits, in snuff-coloured ribbed silk, seamed and bound with black. From Edelle, Davies Street.

Right : Ear-rings of flowers match the spray of daisies on this delightful yellow hat, with its downward-curving brim. By Renée Pavy, of Davies Street.

The address of French of London in the issue of January 27th was incorrectly given as Curzon Street. This should read 4, Curzon Place.

Above : Lilac, the flower of Spring, surrounds this little mauve pillbox, trimmed with a gay, spotted veil. By Hugh Beresford, Davies Street.

Right : A sprightly and becoming tailored hat in stripes of the ever-popular Spring shades of navy and white. From Erik of Brook Street.

Below : A flattering hat in white felt, bound with black, a compromise between a Dutch girl's bonnet and the 'twenties' cloche. By Harvane, Wilton Place.

Model soldiers by Riché, of Hay Hill.
Fabric gloves by Pinkham.

OUR FASHIO[...]

Black suède and satin combine in I. Miller's pumps, with their tapered toes and well-shaped heels. Price 6 gns., from Russell and Bromley.

Tailored shoes with slim, shaped heels and tapered toes, finished with a neat bow trimming. By Rayne, price 9 gns.

A sophisticated and sleek, flat shoe, with a neat buckle trimming. By Joyce, price 59s. 9d., from Russell and Bromley.

Suède pumps for town-wear, with tapered toes and satin trimming. By Holmes, 105s., from Russell and Bromley.

. . . . and there's a

PORTFOLIO (continued)

Charming summer sandals, with spindly heels and bared toes. In pastel shades, white-trimmed. Price 10 gns., from Rayne.

Strip sandals, with brilliant or jet trimming and a sling-back heel. In many shades, 136s. 6d., by Bally, at Russell and Bromley.

Flatties with shape, suppleness and smart openwork. Available in March, 59s. 9d., from Dolcis West End shops.

The comfortable "Soft-toe" shoe, with its pretty little Louis heel. In many shades, 79s. 9d., in March in Dolcis West End shops.

spring in your feet

MOTORING with WILLIAM HARTLEY

The Wolseley Four Forty-Four

MOST manufacturers have a range of names for their cars, but so far Wolseley have kept to mere figures. But one is tempted to say that a forty-four by any other number would run as well, and a good car does not need a fancy name.

This Four Forty-Four is, I consider, the sort of product upon which the fame of our motor industry has been built. It is not flashy in any direction, yet it satisfies from all points of view.

Take the external appearance. There is still the Wolseley radiator happily combined with a very fine, modern line right through to the rear bumper. I have heard it likened to what is now known as the classic Italian line: the Italians being the originators of the desirable trend in current body design.

There are other most attractive features, too. The interior trim and polished wood finish are a joy to find among the garish flood of coloured metal and economy-skimped mixtures which we so often suffer now. After all, it is the owners who ride inside the car; our comfort should be more important than to impress the external beholder.

On the road, still nothing flashy, but an ability to cruise at a pleasant 55 to 60, with a maximum in the region of 70 m.p.h. From the engine, little or no fuss and a consumption of around 25 m.p.g., even when pressed.

The steering calls for no comment, except, perhaps, that the wheel is a little too small for my choice. And while on that subject, I do complain about the horn-ring mounted on the wheel. It is slightly above the level of the rim, which may be handy for blowing the horn when you want to, but is too handy for the times when you don't. In the course of a long week-end, I should think I blew it a score of times without intent, to the annoyance of several passers-by, two or three other motorists, and two policemen (one absolutely furious!). My first job if I were lucky enough to take delivery of one of these Four Forty-Fours would be to wire the horn through the ignition.

The Wolseley people have placed the spare wheel in a vertical position in the luggage boot at the side. This means that one can get it out easily and in a clean state, without moving the boot's contents. And the boot is very deep. Too many boots, while large in capacity, will not carry any tall object. (I habitually carry the oddest things in the boot!) This is a good boot and should satisfy the most loaded traveller.

One more point. I believe I have written before of my enthusiasm for listening to the wireless while driving (I have a special interest, of course). Now the trouble with most cars is that, having set the volume control while passing through a town and having settled down to listen to the news, as soon as one gets clear of the traffic and accelerates to high cruising speed, the general noise drowns the news-reader's voice! So one resets the volume control. A few minutes pass and one enters a village with a red traffic light gleaming. One stops. The radio now proceeds to deafen you and the whole village catches up with latest news. Of all the cars I have tried for some time long, this Wolseley Four Forty-Four gave me least trouble in this respect. The general noise level keeps remarkably low and little volume control twiddling was necessary. Praise to the car for that and may some bright radio man take the hint.

So you will see that I like the Four Forty-Four very much. There is only the horn-ring to complain about, with the possible addition of the difficulty of cleaning out the interior due to the sunken floor. But as this contributes so much to the low line and comfort, we'll let that pass. Worth the extra money above the more ordinary cars of the same size, the general refinement will always appeal to those who like nice things.

THE JOKE THAT CAME TRUE . . . INTOLERABLE TAX BURDEN . . . LOW-INCOME MOTORISTS

WELL, I've read about it, and heard jokes about it. Now, at last, I've seen it: the man who is so enthusiastic that his car is in pieces inside his house; in fact, in what should be his lounge.

The enthusiast is Mr. Rupert Instone, and the house is not very far from Coventry. The car is the *Mezzolitre*, a 500 c.c. special which he and his friends are rebuilding for the coming season. Without doubt the best looking of these little but very fast cars, the *Mezzolitre* has had a run of bad luck, but hopes are high now. There it is, in a dismantled state in the centre of the floor of a pleasant room.

I'm told that first an odd piece or two came in. Then furniture had to make way for equipment. Now, it is a workshop pure and simple, with ample heat and light and boundless enthusiasm at work by Mr. Instone and his colleagues.

The name of Instone will be remembered by older readers as being associated with Daimler, where Rupert's father was so long active. He it was who, in a Daimler, set up the first fastest-time-of-the-day at Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb before World War I.

* * *

IT is not often that I find myself agreeing over anything with Mr. Michael Foot. I recently read some article of his in which he points out that bus fares are taxed more than mink. I am not much concerned with bus fares, and even less with mink, but the figures which gave rise to this somewhat odd link are very much my concern. Mr. Foot states that, while mink is taxed at 75 per cent., Diesel fuel for buses is taxed at 214 per cent. (The tax for petrol is even higher.)

While this is a shrewd political point, I counter it with the comment that, so far as I can recall, no Government of any hue has done anything to relieve the burden placed upon the road user's shoulders. In fact, they have tended to vie with one another as to who can heap more on the load. Mr. Foot's colleagues had opportunity, but only added to the intolerable burden.

And intolerable burden it is, too. The whole road transport of the country is grossly overtaxed out of all proportion to other items of far less import to the country.

If it is desired to lower the cost of living and thus raise the value of wages without these interminable wage claims and strikes, then surely a reduction of the road vehicle fuel tax would do it in one fell swoop. Bus fares and delivery charges for all manner of goods would be reduced and every single person would gain.

There is time now for every motorist (and bus passenger) who is so directly affected to get busy before the Budget with some "messages of recommendation" to Westminster.

* * *

TO own a car used at one time to be a sign of wealth, and thus we could expect no quarter from one party at least.

Now that the Oxford University Bureau of Statistics have stated that nearly half the cars in the country are owned by people earning less than £12 per week, perhaps there is a chance that both the larger political parties might vie with each other in trying to curry our favour.

What a glorious dream!

The Englishman's* Guide to Smirnoff Vodka

The Island Race are among the world's most discerning drinkers. They are, however, notably conservative in their tastes, preferring to stick to what they know than experiment with alien beverages of doubtful potency. Believing, however, that Englishmen* should share in the pleasures of cocktail imbibers in other lands, we gladly provide a few facts about the world-famous Smirnoff Vodka.

1. Smirnoff Vodka is a smooth palatable drink, no stronger than your Gin, Whisky or Rum.	**3. Smirnoff Vodka makes a most attractive drink taken straight "à la Russe," especially when accompanied by savouries.**
2. Smirnoff Vodka is today one of America's most popular drinks, where it is used as the blending spirit for new and established cocktails as well as for long drinks.	**4. Smirnoff Vodka is made in this country according to the traditional recipe used by Pierre Smirnoff, purveyor of Vodka to the Imperial Court of Russia.**

Try Smirnoff instead of Gin in your favourite cocktail. Try a VODKATINI (Smirnoff Vodka and Vermouth mixed in your favourite proportions) and a SCREWDRIVER (Smirnoff Vodka and Orange Juice).

**To say nothing of the Scots, the Welsh and those of the Irish whose pleasures know no frontier.*

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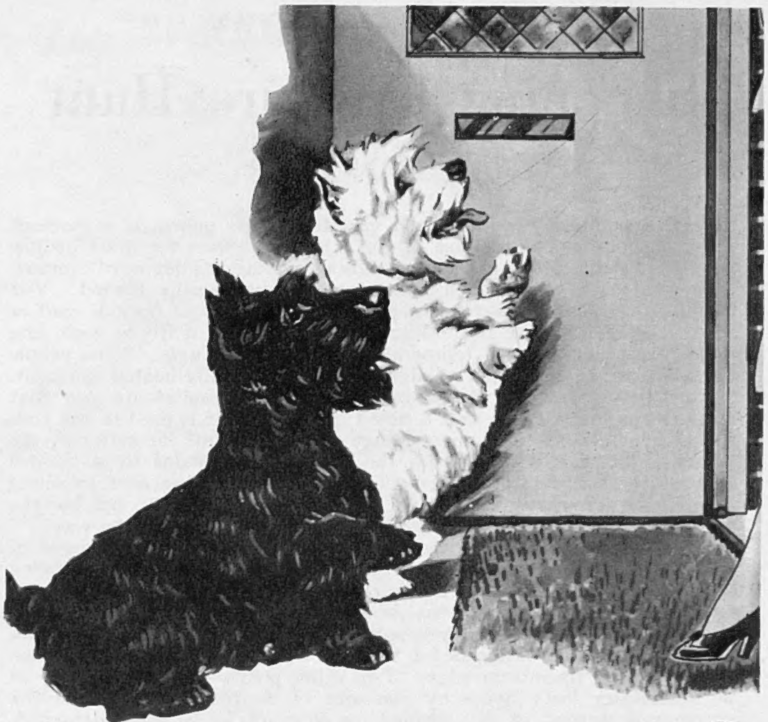

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FOR MEN AND WOMEN

Shopping Treasure Hunt

By SUSAN CARR

THE first thing I want to tell you about this month is a garment which, while it remains in the "luxury" class for most people, provides for the elderly and for invalids an astonishing degree of comfort. This is a really elegant bed-jacket which is electrically heated. You can imagine the cosy warmth it provides while you sit up and read or have your breakfast in bed. You can even sleep in it if you wish, and it will maintain an even temperature all night through. Some people are alarmed at the mere thought of an electrically-heated garment, fearing that something might go wrong. But I can assure you that fears are groundless and that a new type of element is used in the bed-jacket which works at a low voltage (24 volts) and, furthermore, the jacket is entirely isolated from the high voltage mains by a control box which is fitted to a two-way switch enabling the user to select medium or low temperature as desired. Don't be put off by the thought of that control box; in practice it doesn't get in the way.

The bed-jacket comes in three models: the *de luxe* one is made of peach quilted satin lined with *crêpe de chine*, and has a frilly edging of georgette; the short-back model (not so short really, but for the average figure) measures 16 ins. from the shoulder to the bottom edge, and is in peach or sky-quilted satin lined with rayon; the long-back model is specially designed for the tall woman and measures 26 ins. from shoulder to bottom edge. Two other points—the bed-jacket can be heated for forty hours by one unit of electricity; and when the garment is washed or dry cleaned the element can be easily detached.

* * *

The advantages of Terylene over other fabrics are already well known, so I am delighted to be able to tell you about some skirts, now on sale, which are made of 50 per cent. Terylene and 50 per cent. wool. This blended fabric has exceptional resistance to creasing, stretch and loss of shape. These skirts also have the outstanding advantage that you can wash them at home and the pleats will stay in place, no ironing being necessary. I'm told that these skirts, which are not at all expensive, are the forerunners of both women's and men's suits which will be made in a similar fabric of heavier weight.

* * *

Memories of the dreary brown and black galoshes of my childhood—much despised but most practical—were recalled when I was introduced to a pair of their modern offspring. The new members of the family are called "Gollies," but are smart as well as useful. They are made of latex rubber, ridged under the sole to prevent slipping, and are supplied in a plastic carrying bag. The "Gollies" slip neatly over your shoes, leaving only the heels unprotected, and are reversible in black and red, black and grey or brown and beige.

* * *

Most people these days have a number of fireproof dishes in their kitchen and know how useful they are both for cooking and serving food, many such dishes being taken straight from the oven to the dining-room table. I have just found an adjustable fireproof dish-stand which comes from Holland. This will take almost any size or shape of fireproof dish from round or square to oval—in fact, I spent a fascinating but fruitless ten minutes trying to find a dish which it wouldn't take! The stand, which is made of metal, has handles to protect your fingers—it is quite respectable enough for a dinner-party, and gives a much less "oveney" look to your casserole!

* * *

When I went to Sweden for a holiday in 1947, I brought back with me a felt telephone holder, which has since proved invaluable. It fits round the telephone receiver and fixes itself firmly, but comfortably, between my chin and shoulder, supporting the mouthpiece at the right angle, but leaving me with both hands free to write notes. Once you have perfected the technique of using the holder (and this doesn't take long) you would never be without it. A rubber-cap version of this holder, called "Hold-a-phone," is now on sale in London; I have tried it and found it just as effective as my Swedish one.

How Much It Costs And Where To Find It.

"Therm Accurate" bed-jackets: De Luxe model, 15 guineas; long-back model, 10 guineas; and short-back model, 9 guineas; Army and Navy Stores.

Terylene and wool skirts: sunray pleating, 72s. 6d.; split sunray pleating, 79s. 6d., and accordion pleating, £5 15s. 6d. (each in ten sizes, including sizes for the shorter woman); Harrods.

"Gollies" (overshoes): 9s. 6d. (three sizes: small, medium and large); Dolcis, Saxone and other shoe shops.

Dutch adjustable fireproof dish-stand: 19s. 6d.; Staines of Victoria Street.

"Hold-a-phone": 2s. 6d.; Army and Navy Stores.

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TRAIN UP A WIFE, ETC.

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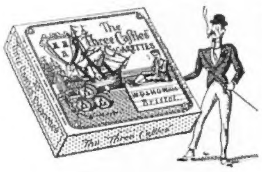
"The Lady is well aware of the Fact, Sir; and, being my Wife, she knows better than to object."

[More likely the Good Lady is mutely envious of his Great Fortune in being able to enjoy, during the journey, the Exceptional Delight of a "THREE CASTLES" Cigarette—a Delight which she, heretofore, has been able to pursue only in the Privacy of her Boudoir.



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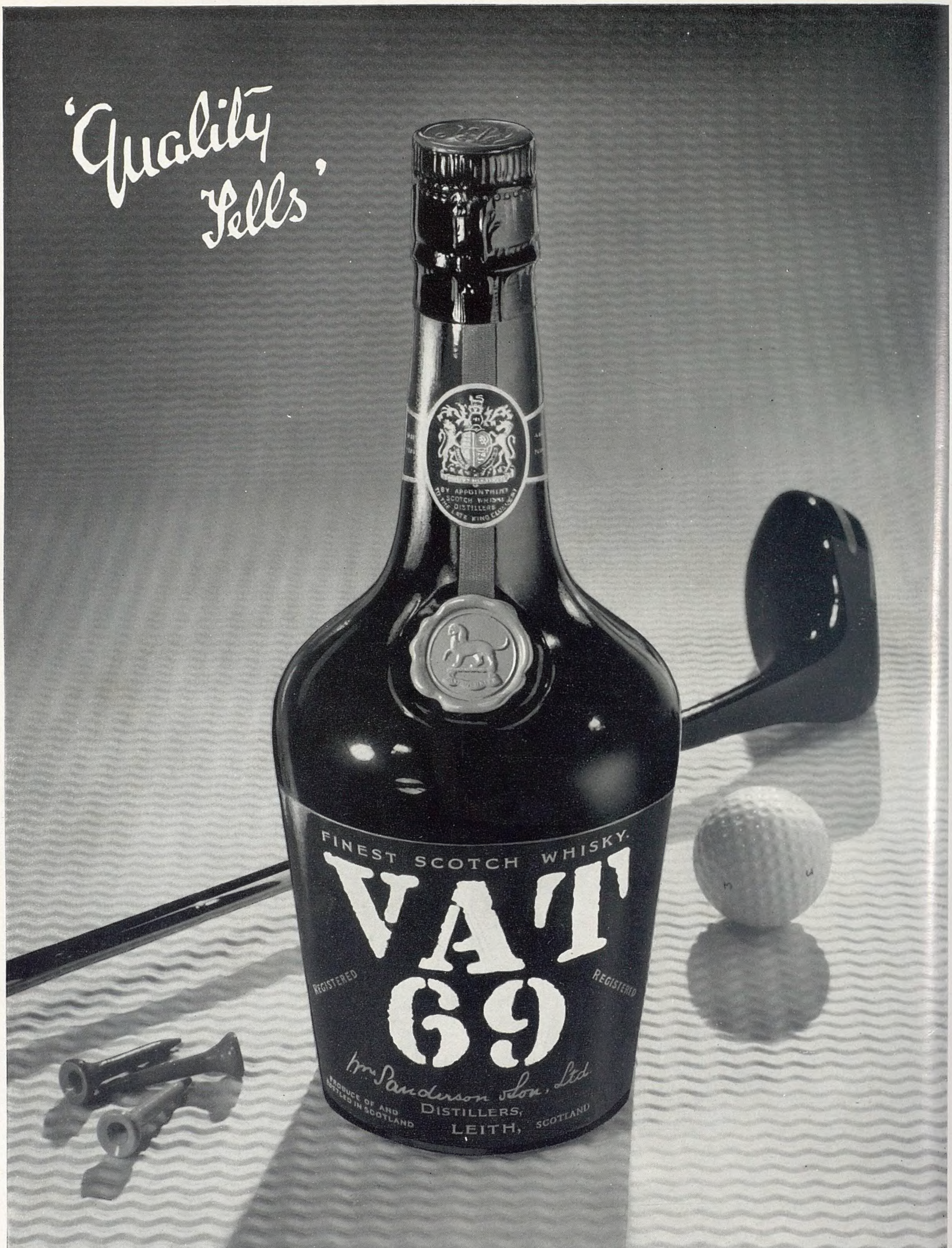

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